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# TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

# SOURCE OF THE NILE,

IN THE YEARS

1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BRUCE, OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F. R. S.

VOL. II.

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*Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,*
*Occuluitque caput, quod adhuc latet.*——

OVID. Metam.

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# TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

# THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

## BOOK II.

ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST AGES OF THE INDIAN AND AFRICAN TRADE——THE FIRST PEOPLING OF ABYSSINIA AND ATBARA——SOME CONJECTURES CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE THERE.

### CHAP. I.

*Of the India trade in its earlieſt ages—Settlement of Ethiopia—Troglodytes—Building of the firſt cities.*

THE farther back we go into the hiſtory of Eaſtern nations, the more reaſon we have to be ſurpriſed at the accounts of their immenſe riches and magnificence. One who reads the hiſtory of Egypt is like a traveller walking through its ancient, ruined, and deſerted towns, where all are palaces and temples, without any trace of private or ordinary habitation. So in the earlieſt, though now muti-

lated, accounts which we have of them, all is power, ſplendour, and riches, attended by the luxury which was the neceſſary conſequence, without any clue or thread left us by which we can remount, or be conducted, to the ſource or fountain whence this variety of wealth had flowed; without ever being able to arrive at a period, when theſe people were poor and mean, or even in a ſtate of mediocrity, or upon a footing with European nations.

The ſacred ſcriptures, the moſt ancient, as well as the moſt credible of all hiſtories, repreſent Paleſtine, of which they particularly treat, in the earlieſt ages, as not only full of poliſhed, powerful, and orderly ſtates, but abounding alſo in ſilver and gold *, in a greater proportion than is to be found this day in any ſtate in Europe, though immenſely rich dominions in a new world have been added to the poſſeſſion of that territory, which furniſhed the greateſt quantity of gold and ſilver to the old. Paleſtine, however, is a poor country, left to its own reſources and produce merely. It muſt have been always a poor country, without ſome extraordinary connection with foreign nations. It never contained either mines of gold or ſilver, and though, at moſt periods of its hiſtory, it appears to have been but thinly inhabited, it never of itſelf produced wherewithal to ſupport and maintain the few that dwelt in it.

Mr. De Monteſquieu †, ſpeaking of the wealth of Semiramis, imagines that the great riches of the Aſſyrian

* Exod. xxxviii. 39. † Lib. 21. cap. 6.

Aſſyrian empire in her reign, aroſe from this queen's having plundered ſome more ancient and richer nation, as they, in their turn, fell afterwards a prey to a poorer, but more warlike enemy. But however true this fact may be with regard to Semiramis, it does not ſolve the general difficulty, as ſtill the ſame queſtion recurs, concerning the wealth of that prior nation, which the Aſſyrians plundered, and from which they received their treaſure. I believe the example is rare, that a large kingdom has been enriched by war. Alexander conquered all Aſia, part of Africa, and a conſiderable portion of Europe; he plundered Semiramis's kingdom, and all thoſe that were tributary to her; he went farther into the Indies than ever ſhe did, though her territories bordered upon the river Indus itſelf; yet neither Macedon, nor any of the neighbouring provinces of Greece, could ever compare with the ſmall diſtricts of Tyre and Sidon for riches.

War diſperſes wealth in the very inſtant it acquires it; but commerce, well regulated, conſtantly and honeſtly ſupported, carried on with œconomy and punctuality, is the only thing that ever did enrich extenſive kingdoms; and one hundred hands employed at the loom will bring to a country more riches and abundance, than ten thouſand bearing ſpears and ſhields. We need not go far to produce an example that will confirm this. The ſubjects and neighbours of Semiramis had brought ſpices by land into Aſſyria. The Iſhmaelites and Midianites, the merchants and carriers of gold from Ethiopia, and more immediately from Paleſtine, met in her dominions; and there was, for a

time, the mart of the Eaſt India trade. But, by an abſurd expedition with an army into India, in hopes to enrich herſelf all at once, ſhe effectually ruined that commerce, and her kingdom fell immediately afterwards.

Whoever reads the hiſtory of the moſt ancient nations, will find the origin of wealth and power to have riſen in the eaſt; then to have gradually advanced weſtward, ſpreading itſelf at the ſame time north and ſouth. They will find the riches and population of thoſe nations decay in proportion as this trade forſakes them; which cannot but ſuggeſt to a good underſtanding, this truth conſtantly to be found in the diſpoſition of all things in this univerſe, that God makes uſe of the ſmalleſt means and cauſes to operate the greateſt and moſt powerful effects. In his hand a pepper-corn is the foundation of the power, glory, and riches of India; he makes an acorn, and by it communicates power and riches to nations divided from India by thouſands of leagues at ſea.

Let us purſue our conſideration of Egypt. Seſoſtris, before the time we have been juſt ſpeaking of, paſſed with a fleet of large ſhips from the Arabian Gulf into the Indian Ocean; he conquered part of India, and opened to Egypt the commerce of that country by ſea. I enter not into the credibility of the number of his fleet, as there is ſcarce any thing credible left us about the ſhipping and navigation of the ancients, or at leaſt, that is not full of difficulties and contradictions; my buſineſs is with the expedition, not with the number of ſhips. It would appear he revived, rather than firſt diſcovered,

vered, this way of carrying on the trade to the Eaſt Indies, which, though it was at times intermitted, (perhaps forgot by the Princes who were contending for the ſovereignty of the continent of Aſia, was, nevertheleſs, perpetually kept up by the trading nations themſelves, from the ports of India and Africa, and on the Red Sea from Edom.

The pilots from theſe ports alone, of all the world, had a ſecret confined to their own knowledge, upon which the ſucceſs of theſe voyages depended. This was the phenomena of the trade-winds * and monſoons, which the pilots of Seſoſtris knew; and which thoſe of Nearchus ſeem to have taught him only in part, in his voyage afterwards, and of which we are to ſpeak in the ſequel. Hiſtory ſays further of Seſoſtris, that the Egyptians conſidered him as their greateſt benefactor, for having laid open to them the trade both of India and Arabia, for having overturned the dominion of the *Shepherd* kings; and, laſtly, for having reſtored to the Egyptian individuals each their own lands, which had been wreſted from them by the violent hands of the Ethiopian *Shepherds*, during the firſt uſurpation of theſe princes.

In memory of his having happily accompliſhed theſe events, Seſoſtris is ſaid to have built a ſhip of cedar, of a hundred and twenty yards in length, the outſide of which he covered with plates of gold, and the inſide with plates of ſilver, and this he dedicated in the temple of Iſis. I will not enter into the defence of the probability of his reaſons for

* Theſe are far from being ſynonymous terms, as we ſhall ſee afterwards.

for having built a ſhip of this ſize, and for ſuch a purpoſe, as one of ten yards would have ſufficiently anſwered. The uſe it was made for, was apparently to ſerve for a hieroglyphic, of what he had accompliſhed, viz. that he had laid open the gold and ſilver trade from the mines in Ethiopia, and had navigated the ocean in ſhips made of wood, which were the only ones, he thereby inſinuated, that could be employed in that trade. The Egyptian ſhips, at that time, were all made of the reed papyrus §, covered with ſkins or leather, a conſtruction which no people could venture to preſent to the ocean.

There is much to be learned from a proper underſtanding of theſe laſt benefits conferred by Seſoſtris upon his Egyptian ſubjects. When we underſtand theſe, which is very eaſy to any that have travelled in the countries we are ſpeaking of, (for nations and cauſes have changed very little in theſe countries to this day), it will not be difficult to find a ſolution of this problem, What was the commerce that, progreſſively, laid the foundation of all that immenſe grandeur of the eaſt; what poliſhed them, and cloathed them with ſilk, ſcarlet, and gold; and what carried the arts and ſciences among them, to a pitch, perhaps, never yet ſurpaſſed, and this ſome thouſands of years before nations in Europe had any other habitation than their native woods, or cloathing than the ſkins of beaſts, wild and domeſtic, or government, but that firſt, innate one, which nature had given to the ſtrongeſt?

Let us inquire what was the connection Seſoſtris brought about between Egypt and India; what was that

§ See the article Papyrus in the Appendix.

that commerce of Ethiopia and Arabia, by which he enriched Egypt, and what was their connection with the peninsula of India; who were those kings who bore so opposite an office, as to be at the same time *Shepherds*; and who were those *Shepherds*, near, and powerful enough to wrest the property of their lands from four millions of inhabitants.

To explain this, it will be necessary to enter into some detail, without which no person dipping into the ancient or modern history of this part of Africa, can have any precise idea of it, nor of the different nations inhabiting the peninsula, the source of whose wealth consisted entirely in the early, but well-established commerce between Africa and India. What will make this subject of more easy explanation is, that the ancient employment and occupations of these people in the first ages, were still the same that subsist at this day. The people have altered a little by colonies of strangers being introduced among them, but their manners and employments are the same as they originally were. What does not relate to the ancient history of these people, I shall only mention in the course of my travels when passing through, or sojourning amongst them.

Providence had created the inhabitants of the peninsula of India under many disadvantages in point of climate. The high and wholesome part of the country was covered with barren and rugged mountains; and, at different times of the year, violent rains fell in large currents down the sides of these, which overflowed all the fertile land below; and these rains were no sooner over, than they were succeeded

ſucceeded by a ſcorching ſun, the effect of which upon the human body, was to render it feeble, enervated, and incapable of the efforts neceſſary for agriculture. In this flat country, large rivers, that ſcarce had declivity enough to run, crept ſlowly along, through meadows of fat black earth, ſtagnating in many places as they went, rolling an abundance of decayed vegetables, and filling the whole air with exhalations of the moſt corrupt and putrid kind. Even rice, the general food of man, the ſafeſt and moſt friendly to the inhabitants of that country, could not grow but by laying under water the places where it was ſown, and therefore rendering them, for ſeveral months, abſolutely improper for man's dwelling. Providence had done this, but, never failing in its wiſdom, had made to the natives a great deal more than a ſufficient amends.

Their bodies were unfit for the fatigues of agriculture, nor was the land proper for common cultivation. But this country produced ſpices of great variety, eſpecially a ſmall berry called Pepper, ſuppoſed, of all others, and with reaſon, to be the greateſt friend to the health of man. This grew ſpontaneouſly, and was gathered without toil. It was at once, a perfect remedy for the inclemencies and diſeaſes of the country, as well as the ſource of its riches, from the demand of foreigners. This ſpecies of ſpice is no where known but in India, though equally uſeful in every putrid region, where, unhappily, theſe diſeaſes reign. Providence has not, as in India, placed remedies ſo near them, thus wiſely providing for the welfare of mankind in general, by the dependency it has forced one man to

have

have upon another. In India, and ſimilar climates, this ſpice is not uſed in ſmall quantities, but in ſuch, as to be nearly equal to that of bread.

In cloathing, Providence had not been leſs kind to India. The ſilk worm, with little fatigue and trouble to man, almoſt without his interference, provided for him a ſtuff, at once the ſofteſt, the moſt light and brilliant, and conſequently the beſt adapted to warm countries; and cotton, a vegetable production, growing every where in great abundance, without care, which may be conſidered as almoſt equal to ſilk, in many of its qualities, and ſuperior to it in ſome, afforded a variety ſtill cheaper for more general uſe. Every tree without culture produced them fruit of the moſt excellent kind; every tree afforded them ſhade, under which, with a very light and portable *loom* of cane, they could paſs their lives delightfully in a calm and rational enjoyment, by the gentle exerciſe of weaving, at once providing for the health of their bodies, the neceſſities of their families, and the riches of their country.

But however plentifully their ſpices grew, in whatever quantity the Indians conſumed them, and however generally they wore their own manufactures, the ſuperabundance of both was ſuch, as naturally led them to look out for articles againſt which they might barter their ſuperfluities. This became neceſſary to ſupply the wants of thoſe things that had been withheld for them, for wiſe ends, or which, from wantonneſs, luxury, or ſlender neceſſity, they had created in their own imaginations.

Far

Far to the weſtward of them, but part of the ſame continent, connected by a long deſart, and dangerous coaſt, was the peninſula of Arabia, which produced no ſpices, tho' the neceſſities of its climate ſubjected its inhabitants to the ſame diſeaſes as thoſe in India. In fact, the country and climate were exactly ſimilar, and, conſequently, the plentiful uſe of theſe warm productions was as neceſſary there, as in India, the country where they grew.

It is true, Arabia was not abandoned wholly to the inclemency of its climate, as it produced myrrh and frankincenſe, which, when uſed as perfumes or fumigations, were powerful antiſeptics of their kind, but adminiſtered rather as preventatives, than to remove the diſorder when it once prevailed. Theſe were kept up at a price, of which, at this day, we have no conception, but which never diminiſhed from any circumſtance, under which the country where they grew, laboured.

The ſilk and cotton of India were white and colourleſs, liable to ſoil, and without any variety; but Arabia produced gum and dyes of various colours, which were highly agreeable to the taſte of the Aſiatics. We find the ſacred ſcriptures ſpeak of the party-coloured garment as the mark of the greateſt honour *. Solomon, in his proverbs, too, ſays, that he decked his bed with coverings of tapeſtry of Egypt †. But Egypt had neither ſilk nor cotton manufactory, no, nor even wool. Solomon's coverings though he had them from Egypt, were therefore an article of barter with India.

Balm,

* Gen. xxxvii. 3. and 2 Sam. xiii. 18. † Prov. vii. 16.

Balm, or Balſam *, was a commodity produced in Arabia, ſold at a very high price, which it kept up till within theſe few centuries in the eaſt; when the Venetians carried on the India trade by Alexandria, this Balſam then ſold for its weight in gold; it grows in the ſame place, and, I believe, nearly in the ſame quantity as ever, but, for very obvious reaſons †, it is now of little value.

The baſis of trade, or a connection between theſe two countries, was laid, then, from the beginning, by the hand of Providence. The wants and neceſſities of the one found a ſupply, or balance from the other. Heaven had placed them not far diſtant, could the paſſage be made by ſea; but violent, ſteady, and unconquerable winds preſented themſelves to make that paſſage of the ocean impoſſible, and we are not to doubt, but, for a very conſiderable time, this was the reaſon why the commerce of India was diffuſed through the continent, by land only, and from this aroſe the riches of Semiramis.

But, however precious the merchandiſe of Arabia was, it was neither in quantity, nor quality, capable of balancing the imports from India. Perhaps they might have paid for as much as was uſed in the peninſula of Arabia itſelf, but, beyond this there was a vaſt continent called Africa, capable of conſuming many hundred fold more than Arabia; which lying under the ſame parallel with India, part of it ſtill farther ſouth, the diſeaſes of the climate, and the wants of its numerous inhabitants, were, in many parts of it, the ſame as thoſe of Arabia

* Vide Appendix, where this tree is deſcribed.

† The quantity of ſimilar drugs brought from the New World.

Arabia and India; beſides which there was the Red Sea, and divers communications to the northward.

Neither their luxuries nor neceſſaries were the ſame as thoſe of Europe. And indeed Europe, at this time, was probably inhabited by ſhepherds, hunters, and fiſhers, who had no luxury at all, or ſuch as could not be ſupplied from India; they lived in woods and marſhes, with the animals which made their ſport, food, and cloathing.

The inhabitants of Africa then, this vaſt Continent, were to be ſupplied with the neceſſaries, as well as the luxuries of life, but they had neither the articles Arabia wanted, nor thoſe required in India, at leaſt, for a time they thought ſo; and ſo long they were not a trading people.

It is a tradition among the Abyſſinians, which they ſay they have had from time immemorial, and which is equally received among the Jews and Chriſtians, that almoſt immediately after the flood, Cuſh, grandſon of Noah, with his family, paſſing through Atbara from the low country of Egypt, then without inhabitants, came to the ridge of mountains which ſtill ſeparates the flat country of Atbara from the more mountainous high-land of Abyſſinia.

By caſting his eye upon the map, the reader will ſee a chain of mountains, beginning at the Iſthmus of Suez, that runs all along like a wall, about forty miles from the Red Sea, till it divides in lat. 13°, into two branches. The one goes along the northern frontiers of Abyſſinia, croſſes the Nile, and then proceeds weſtward, through Africa towards the Atlantic

lantic Ocean. The other branch goes ſouthward, and then eaſt, taking the form of the Arabian Gulf; after which, it continues ſouthward all along the Indian Ocean, in the ſame manner as it did in the beginning all along the Red Sea, that is parallel to the coaſt.

Their tradition ſays, that, terrified with the late dreadful event the flood, ſtill recent in their minds, and apprehenſive of being again involved in a ſimilar calamity, they choſe for their habitation caves in the ſides of theſe mountains, rather than truſt themſelves again on the plain. It is more than probable, that, ſoon after their arrival, meeting here with the tropical rains, which, for duration, ſtill exceed the days that occaſioned the flood, and obſerving, that going through Atbara, that part of Nubia between the Nile and Aſtaboras, afterwards called Meroë, from a dry climate at firſt, they had after fallen in with rains, and as thoſe rains increaſed in proportion to their advancing ſouthward, they choſe to ſtop at the firſt mountains, where the country was fertile and pleaſant, rather than proceed farther at the riſk of involving themſelves, perhaps in a land of floods, that might prove as fatal to their poſterity as that of Noah had been to their anceſtors.

This is a conjecture from probability, only mentioned for illuſtration, for the motives that guided them cannot certainly be known; but it is an undoubted fact, that here the Cuſhites, with unparalleled induſtry, and with inſtruments utterly unknown to us, formed for themſelves commodious, yet wonderful habitations in the heart of mountains

of

of granite and marble, which remain entire in great numbers to this day, and promiſe to do ſo till the conſummation of all things. This original kind of dwellings ſoon extended themſelves through the neighbouring mountains. As the Cuſhites grew populous, they occupied thoſe that were next them, ſpreading the induſtry and arts which they cultivated, as well to the eaſtern as to the weſtern ocean, but, content with their firſt choice, they never deſcended from their caves, nor choſe to reſide at a diſtance on the plain.

It is very ſingular that St. Jerome does not know where to look for this family, or deſcendents of Cuſh; though they are as plainly pointed out, and as often alluded to by ſcripture, as any nation in the Old Teſtament. They are deſcribed, moreover, by the particular circumſtances of their country, which have never varied, to be in the very place where I now fix them, and where, ever ſince, they have remained, and ſtill do to this preſent hour, in the ſame mountains, and the ſame houſes of ſtone they formed for themſelves in the beginning. And yet Bochart*, profeſſedly treating this ſubject, as it were induſtriouſly, involves it in more than Egyptian darkneſs. I rather refer the reader to his work, to judge for himſelf, than, quoting it by extracts, communicate the confuſion of his ideas to my narrative.

The Abyſſinian tradition further ſays, they built the city of Axum ſome time early in the days of Abraham. Soon after this, they puſhed their colony down to Atbara, where we know from Herodotus,

* Boch. lib. 4. cap. 3.

dotus *, they early and ſucceſsfully purſued their ſtudies, from which Joſephus ſays †, they were called Meroëtes, or inhabitants of the iſland of Meroe.

The prodigious fragments of coloſſal ſtatues of the dog-ſtar, ſtill to be ſeen at Axum, ſufficiently ſhew what a material object of their attention they conſidered him to be; and Seir, which in the language of the Troglodytes, and in that of the low country of Meroe, exactly correſponding to it, ſignifies a *dog*, inſtructs us in the reaſon why this province was called *Sire*, and the large river which bounds it, *Siris*.

I apprehend the reaſon why, without forſaking their ancient domiciles in the mountains, they choſe this ſituation for another city, Meroe, was owing to an imperfection they had diſcovered (both in Siré and in their caves below it) to reſult from their climate. They were within the tropical rains; and, conſequently, were impeded and interrupted in the neceſſary obſervations of the heavenly bodies, and the progreſs of aſtronomy which they ſo warmly cultivated. They muſt have ſeen, likewiſe, a neceſſity of building Meroe farther from them than perhaps they wiſhed, for the ſame reaſon they built Axum in the high country of Abyſſinia in order to avoid the fly (a phænomenon of which I ſhall afterwards ſpeak) which purſued them everywhere within the limits of the rains, and which muſt have given an abſolute law in thoſe firſt times to the regulations of the Cuſhite ſettlements. They therefore went the length of lat. 16°, where I ſaw the ruins ſuppoſed to be thoſe of Meroe ‡, and caves in the mountains

* Herod. lib. 2. cap. 29. † Joſeph. antiquit. Jud.

‡ At Gerri in my return through the deſert.

mountains immediately above that ſituation, which I cannot doubt were the temporary habitation of the builders of that firſt ſeminary of learning.

It is probable that, immediately upon their ſucceſs at Meroe, they loſt no time in ſtretching on to Thebes. We know that it was a colony of Ethiopians, and probably from Meroe, but whether directly, or not, we are not certain. A very ſhort time might have paſſed between the two eſtabliſhments, for we find above Thebes, as there are above Meroe, a vaſt number of caves, which the colony made proviſionally, upon its firſt arrival, and which are very near the top of the mountain, all inhabited to this day.

Hence we may infer, that their ancient apprehenſions of a deluge had not left them whilſt, they ſaw the whole land of Egypt could be overflowed every year without rain falling upon it; that they did not abſolutely, as yet, truſt to the ſtability of towns like thoſe of Sirè and Meroë, placed upon columns or ſtones, one laid upon the other, or otherwiſe, that they found their excavations in the mountains were finiſhed with leſs trouble, and more comfortable when complete, than the houſes that were built. It was not long before they aſſumed a greater degree of courage.

CHAP.

## CHAP. II.

*Saba and the South of Africa peopled—Shepherds, their particular Employment and Circumſtances—Abyſſinia occupied by ſeven ſtranger Nations—Specimens of their ſeveral Languages—Conjectures concerning them.*

WHILE theſe improvements were going on ſo proſperouſly in the central and northern territory of the deſcendents of Cuſh, their brethren to the ſouth were not idle, they had extended themſelves along the mountains that run parallel to the Arabian Gulf; which was in all times called Saba, or Azabo, both which ſignify *South*, not becauſe Saba was ſouth of Jeruſalem, but becauſe it was on the ſouth coaſt of the Arabian Gulf, and, from Arabia and Egypt, was the firſt land to the ſouthward which bounded the African Continent, then richer, more important, and better known, than the reſt of the world. By that acquiſition, they enjoyed all the perfumes and aromatics in the eaſt, myrrh, and frankincenſe, and caſſia; all which grow ſpontaneouſly in that ſtripe of ground, from the Bay of Bilur weſt of Azab, to Cape Gardefan, and then ſouthward up in the Indian Ocean, to near the coaſt of Melinda, where there is cinnamon, but of an inferior kind.

Arabia probably had not then ſet itſelf up as a rival to this ſide of the Red Sea, nor had it intro-

duced from Abyſſinia the myrrh and frankincenſe, as it did afterwards, for there is no doubt that the principal mart, and growth of theſe gums, were always near Saba. Upon the conſumption increaſing, they, however, were tranſplanted thence into Arabia, where the myrrh has not ſucceeded.

The Troglodyte extended himſelf ſtill farther ſouth. As an aſtronomer, he was to diſengage himſelf from the tropical rains and cloudy ſkies that hindered his correſpondent obſervations with his countrymen at Meroë and Thebes. As he advanced within the ſouthern tropic, he, however, ſtill found rains, and made his houſes ſuch as the fears of a deluge had inſtructed him to do. He found there ſolid and high mountains, in a fine climate; but, luckier than his countrymen to the northward, he found gold and ſilver in large quantities, which determined his occupation, and made the riches and conſequence of his country. In theſe mountains, called *the Mountains of Sofala*, large quantities of both metals were diſcovered in their pure unmixed ſtate, lying in globules without alloy, or any neceſſity of preparation or ſeparation.

The balance of trade, ſo long againſt the Arabian and African continents, turned now in their favour from the immenſe influx of theſe precious metals, found in the mountains of Sofala, juſt on the verge of the ſouthern tropical rains.

Gold and ſilver had been fixed upon in India as proper returns for their manufactures and produce. It is impoſſible to ſay whether it was from their hardneſs or beauty, or what other reaſon governed the mind of man in making this ſtandard of barter.

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The hiſtory of the particular tranſactions of thoſe times is loſt, if indeed, there ever was ſuch hiſtory, and, therefore, all further inquiries are in vain. The choice, it ſeems, was a proper one, ſince it has continued unaltered ſo many ages in India, and has been univerſally adopted by all nations pretty much in the proportion or value as in India, into which continent gold and ſilver, from this very early period, began to flow, have continued ſo to do to this day, and in all probability will do to the end of time. What has become of that immenſe quantity of bullion, how it is conſumed, or where it is depoſited, and which way, if ever it returns, are doubts which I never yet found a perſon that could ſatisfactorily ſolve.

The Cuſhite then inhabited the mountains, whilſt the northen colonies advanced from Meroë to Thebes, buſy and intent upon the improvement of architecture, and building of towns, which they began to ſubſtitute for their caves; they thus became traders, farmers, artificers of all kinds, and even practical aſtronomers, from having a meridian night and day free from clouds, for ſuch was that of the Thebaid. As this was impoſſible to their brethren, and ſix months continual rain confined them to theſe caves, we cannot doubt but that their ſedentary life made them uſeful in reducing the many obſervations daily made by thoſe of their countrymen who lived under a purer ſky. Letters too, at leaſt one ſort of them, and arithmetical characters, we are told, were invented by this middle part of the Cuſhites, while trade and aſtronomy, the natural hiſtory of the winds and ſeaſons, were what

neceſſarily employed the part of the colony eſtabliſhed at Sofala moſt to the ſouthward.

The very nature of the Cuſhite's commerce, the collecting of gold, the gathering and preparing his ſpices, neceſſarily fixed him perpetually at home; but his profit lay in the diſperſing of theſe ſpices through the continent, otherwiſe his mines, and the trade produced by the poſſeſſion of them, were to him of little avail.

A carrier was abſolutely neceſſary to the Cuſhite, and Providence had provided him one in a nation which were his neighbours. Theſe were in moſt reſpects different, as they had long hair, European features, very duſky and dark complexion, but nothing like the black-moor or negro; they lived in plains, having moveable huts or habitations, attended their numerous cattle, and wandered from the neceſſities and particular circumſtances of their country. Theſe people were in the Hebrew called *Phut*, and, in all other languages, *Shepherds;* they are ſo ſtill, for they ſtill exiſt; they ſubſiſt by the ſame occupation, never had another, and therefore cannot be miſtaken; they are called Balous, Bagla, Belowee, Berberi, Barabra, Zilla and Habab *, which all ſignify but one thing, namely that of *Shepherd.* From their place of habitation, the territory has been called *Barbaria* by the Greeks and Romans, from Berber, in the original ſignifying *ſhepherd.* The authors that ſpeak of the Shepherds ſeem to know little of thoſe of the *Thebaid*, and ſtill leſs

* It his very probable, ſome of theſe words ſignified different degrees among them, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel.

leſs of thoſe of *Ethiopia*, whilſt they fall immediately upon the ſhepherds of the Delta, that they may get the ſooner rid of them, and thruſt them into Aſſyria, Paleſtine, and Arabia. They never ſay what their origin was; how they came to be ſo powerful; what was their occupation; or, properly, the land they inhabited; or what is become of them now, though they ſeem inclined to think the race extinct.

The whole employment of the ſhepherds had been the diſperſing of the Arabian and African goods all over the continent; they had, by that employment, riſen to be a great people: as that trade increaſed, their quantity of cattle increaſed alſo, and conſequently their numbers, and the extent of their territory.

Upon looking at the map, the reader will ſee a chain of mountains which I have deſcribed, and which run in a high ridge nearly ſtraight north, along the Indian Ocean, in a direction parallel to the coaſt, where they end at Cape Gardefan. They then take the direction of the coaſt, and run weſt from Cape Gardefan to the Straits of Babelmandeb, incloſing the frankincenſe and myrrh country, which extends conſiderably to the weſt of Azab. From Babelmandeb they run northward, parallel to the Red Sea, till they end in the ſandy plain at the Iſthmus of Suez, a name probably derived from Suah, *Shepherds*.

Although this ſtripe of land along the Indian Ocean, and afterwards along the Red Sea, was neceſſary to the ſhepherds, becauſe they carried their merchandiſe to the ports there, and thence to Thebes and Memphis upon the Nile, yet the principal

ſeat

ſeat of their reſidence and power was that flat part of Africa between the northern tropic and the mountains of Abyſſinia. This is divided into various diſtricts; it reaches from Maſuah along the ſea-coaſt to Suakem, then turns weſtward, and continues in that direction, having the Nile on the ſouth, the tropic on the north, to the deſerts of Selima, and the confines of Libya on the weſt. This large extent of country is called *Beja*. The next is that diſtrict * in form of a ſhield, as Meroë is ſaid to have been; this name was given it by Cambyſes. It is between the Nile and Aſtaboras, and is now called Atbara. Between the river Mareb, the ancient Aſtuſaſpes on the eaſt, and Atbara on the weſt, is the ſmall plain territory of Derkin, another diſtrict of the ſhepherds. All that range of mountains, running eaſt and weſt, incloſing Derkin and Atbara on the ſouth, and which begins the mountainous country of Abyſſinia, is inhabited by the negro woolly-headed Cuſhite, or Shangalla, living as formerly in caves, who, from having been the moſt cultivated and inſtructed people in the world, have, by a ſtrange reverſe of fortune, relapſed into brutal ignorance, and are hunted by their neighbours like wild beaſts in thoſe foreſts, where they uſed to reign in the utmoſt luxury, liberty, and ſplendour. But the nobleſt, and moſt warlike of all the ſhepherds, were thoſe that inhabited the mountains of the Habab, a conſiderable ridge reaching from the neighbourhood of Maſuah to Suakem, and who ſtill dwell there.

In

* Diod. Sic. lib. 1. cap.

In the ancient language of this country, *So*, or *Suah*, ſignified ſhepherd, or ſhepherds; though we do not know any particular rank or degrees among them, yet we may ſuppoſe theſe called ſimply *ſhepherds* were the common ſort that attended the flocks. Another denomination, part of them bore, was *Hycſos*, founded by us Agſos, which ſignifies *armed ſhepherds*, or ſuch as wore harneſs, which may be ſuppoſed the ſoldiers, or armed force of that nation. The third we ſee mentioned is Ag-ag, which is thought to be the nobles or chiefs of thoſe armed ſhepherds, whence came their title *King of Kings* *. The plural of this is Agagi, or, as it is written in the Ethiopic, Agaazi.

This term has very much puzzled both Scaliger and Ludolf; for, finding in the Abyſſinian books that they are called Agaazi, they torment themſelves about finding the etymology of that word. They imagine them to be Arabs from near the Red Sea, and Mr. Ludolf † thinks the term ſignifies *baniſhed men*. Scaliger, too, has various gueſſes about them nearly to the ſame import. All this, however, is without foundation; the people aſſert themſelves at this day to be Agaazi, that is, a race of Shepherds inhabiting the mountains of the Habab, and have by degrees extended themſelves through the whole province of Tigré, whoſe capital is called Axum, from Ag and Suah, the metropolis, or principal city of the ſhepherds that wore arms.

Nothing

* This was the name of the king of Amalek; he was an Arab ſhepherd, ſlain by Samuel, 1 Sam. xv. 33.

† Ludolf, lib. 1. cap 4.

Nothing was more oppoſite than the manners and life of the Cuſhite, and his carrier the ſhepherd. The firſt, though he had forſaken his caves, and now lived in cities which he had built, was neceſſarily confined at home by his commerce, amaſſing gold, arranging the invoices of his ſpices, hunting in the ſeaſon to provide himſelf with ivory, and food throughout the winter. His mountains, and the cities he built afterwards, were ſituated upon a loomy, black earth, ſo that as ſoon as the tropical rains began to fall, a wonderful phænomenon deprived him of his cattle. Large ſwarms of flies appeared wherever that loomy earth was, which made him abſolutely dependent in this reſpect upon the ſhepherd, but this affected the ſhepherd alſo.

This inſect is called *Zimb*; it has not been deſcribed by any naturaliſt. It is in ſize very little larger than a bee, of a thicker proportion, and his wings, which are broader than thoſe of a bee, placed ſeparate like thoſe of a fly; they are a pure gauze, without colour or ſpot upon them; the head is large, the upper jaw or lip is ſharp, and has at the end of it a ſtrong pointed hair of about a quarter of an inch long; the lower jaw has two of theſe pointed hairs, and this pencil of hairs, when joined together, makes a reſiſtance to the finger nearly equal to that of a ſtrong hog's briſtle. Its legs are ſerrated in the inſide, and the whole covered with brown hair or down. As ſoon as this plague appears, and their buzzing is heard, all the cattle forſake their food, and run wildly about the plain, till they die, worn out with fatigue, fright, and hunger. No remedy remains but to leave the black earth,

and

and haſten down to the ſands of Atbara, and there they remain while the rains laſt, this cruel enemy never daring to purſue them farther.

What enables the ſhepherd to perform the long and toilſome journies acroſs Africa is the camel emphatically called by the Arabs, the *ſhip of the deſert*. He ſeems to have been created for this very trade, endued with parts and qualities adapted to the office he is employed to diſcharge. The drieſt thiſtle, and the bareſt thorn, is all the food this uſeful quadruped requires, and even theſe, to ſave time, he eats while advancing on his journey, without ſtopping, or occaſioning a moment of delay. As it is his lot to croſs immenſe deſerts, where no water is found, and countries not even moiſtened by the dew of heaven, he is endued with the power at one watering-place to lay in a ſtore, with which he ſupplies himſelf for thirty days to come. To contain this enormous quantity of fluid, Nature has formed large ciſterns within him, from which, once filled, he draws at pleaſure the quantity he wants, and pours it into his ſtomach with the ſame effect as if he then drew it from a ſpring, and with this he travels, patiently and vigorouſly, all day long, carrying a prodigious load upon him, through countries infected with poiſonous winds, and glowing with parching and never cooling ſands. Tho' his ſize is immenſe, as is his ſtrength, and his body covered with a thick ſkin, defended with ſtrong hair, yet ſtill he is not capable to ſuſtain the violent punctures the fly makes with his pointed proboſcis. He muſt loſe no time in removing to the ſands of Atbara; for, when once attacked by this fly, his body,

body, head, and legs break out into large boſſes, which ſwell, break, and putrify, to the certain deſtruction of the creature.

Even the elephant and rhinoceros, who, by reaſon of their enormous bulk, and the vaſt quantity of food and water they daily need, cannot ſhift to deſert and dry places as the ſeaſon may require, are obliged to roll themſelves in mud and mire, which, when dry, coats them over like armour, and enables them to ſtand their ground againſt this winged aſſaſſin; yet I have found ſome of theſe tubercles upon almoſt every elephant and rhinoceros that I have ſeen, and attribute them to this cauſe.

All the inhabitants of the ſea-coaſt of Melinda, down to Cape Gardefan, to Saba, and the ſouth coaſt of the Red Sea, are obliged to put themſelves in motion, and remove to the next ſand in the beginning of the rainy ſeaſon, to prevent all their ſtock of cattle from being deſtroyed. This is not a partial emigration; the inhabitants of all the countries from the mountains of Abyſſinia northward, to the confluence of the Nile and Aſtaboras, are once a-year obliged to change their abode, and ſeek protection in the ſands of Beja; nor is there any alternative, or means of avoiding this, though a hoſtile band was in their way, capable of ſpoiling them of half their ſubſtance; and this is now actually the caſe, as we ſhall ſee when we come to ſpeak of Sennaar.

Of all thoſe that have written upon theſe countries, the prophet Iſaiah alone has given an account of this animal, and the manner of its operation. Iſa. vii. ch. 18. and 19. ver. "And it ſhall come to

"paſs,

" paſs, in that day, that the Lord ſhall *hiſs* for the " fly that is in the uttermoſt part of the rivers of " Egypt,"—" And they ſhall come, and ſhall reſt " all of them in the deſolate vallies *, and in the " holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and up- " on all buſhes."

The mountains that I have already ſpoken of, as running through the country of the Shepherds, divide the ſeaſons by a line drawn along their ſummit, ſo exactly, that, while the eaſtern ſide, towards the Red Sea, is deluged with rain for the ſix months that conſtitute our *winter* in Europe, the weſtern ſide towards Atbara enjoys a perpetual ſun, and active vegetation. Again the ſix months, when it is our *ſummer* in Europe, Atbara, or the weſtern ſide of theſe mountains, is conſtantly covered with clouds and rain, while, for the ſame time, the ſhepherd on the eaſtern ſide, towards the Red Sea, feeds his flocks in the moſt exuberant foliage and luxuriant verdure, enjoying the fair weather, free from the fly or any other moleſtation. Theſe great advantages have very naturally occaſioned theſe countries of Atbara and Beja to be the principal reſidence of the ſhepherd and his cattle, and have entailed upon him the neceſſity of a perpetual change of places. Yet ſo little is this inconvenience, ſo ſhort the peregrination, that, from the rain on the weſt ſide, a man, in the ſpace of four hours, will change to the oppoſite ſeaſon, and find himſelf in ſun-ſhine to the eaſtward.

When

* That is, they ſhall cut off from the cattle their uſual retreat to the deſert by taking poſſeſſion of thoſe places, and meeting them there where ordinarily they never come, and which therefore are the refuge of the cattle.

When Carthage was built, the carriage of this commercial city fell into the hands of Lehabim, or Lubim, the Libyan peaſants, and became a great acceſſion to the trade, power, and number of the ſhepherds. In countries to which there was no acceſs by ſhipping, the end of navigation was nearly anſwered by the immenſe increaſe of camels; and this trade, we find, was carried on in the very earlieſt ages on the Arabian ſide, by the Iſhmaelite merchants trading to Paleſtine and Syria, from the ſouth end of the peninſula, with camels. This we learn particularly from Geneſis, they brought myrrh and ſpices, or pepper, and ſold them for ſilver; they had alſo balm, or balſam, but this it ſeems, in thoſe days, they brought from Gilead.

We are ſorry, in reading this curious anecdote preſerved to us in ſcripture, to find in thoſe early ages of the India trade, that another ſpecies of commerce was cloſely connected with it, which modern philanthropy has branded as the diſgrace of human nature. It is plain, from the paſſage, the commerce of ſelling men was then univerſally eſtabliſhed. Joſeph* is bought as readily, and ſold as currently immediately after, as any ox or camel could be at this day. Three nations, Javan, Tubal, and Meſhech †, are mentioned as having their principal trade at Tyre in the ſelling of men; and, as late as St. John's time ‡, this is mentioned as a principal part of the trade of Babylon; notwithſtanding which, no prohibition from God, or cenſure from the prophets, have ever ſtigmatized it either as

* Gen. chap. xxxvii. ver. 25. 28. † Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 13. ‡ Rev. chap. xviii. ver. 13.

irreligious or immoral; on the contrary, it is always ſpoken of as favourably as any ſpecies of commerce whatever. For this, and many other reaſons which I could mention, I cannot think, that purchaſing ſlaves is, in itſelf, either cruel or unnatural. To purchaſe any living creature to abuſe it afterwards, is certainly both baſe and criminal; and the crime becomes ſtill of a deeper dye, when our fellow-creatures come to be the ſufferers. But, although this is an abuſe which accidentally follow the trade, it is no neceſſary part of the trade itſelf; and, it is againſt this abuſe the wiſdom of the legiſlature ſhould be directed, not againſt the trade itſelf.

On the eaſtern ſide of the peninſula of Africa, many thouſand ſlaves are ſold to Aſia, perfectly in the ſame manner as thoſe on the weſt ſide are ſent to the Weſt Indies; but no one, that ever I heard, has as yet opened his mouth againſt the ſale of Africans to the Eaſt Indies; and yet there is an aggravation in this laſt ſale of ſlaves that ſhould touch us much more than the other, where no ſuch additional grievance can be pretended. The ſlaves ſold into Aſia are moſt of them Chriſtians; they are ſold to Mahometans, and, with their liberty, they are certainly deprived of their religion likewiſe. But the treatment of the Aſiatics being much more humane than what the Africans, ſold to the Weſt Indies, meet with, no clamour has yet been raiſed againſt this commerce in Aſia, becauſe its only bad conſequence is apoſtacy; a proof to me that religion has no part in the preſent diſpute, or, as I have ſaid, it is the abuſe that accidentally follows the purchaſing of ſlaves, not the trade itſelf, that ſhould be conſidered as the grievance.

It

It is plain from all hiſtory, that two abominable practices, the one the eating of men, the other of ſacrificing them to the devil, prevailed all over Africa. The India trade, as we have ſeen in very early ages, firſt eſtabliſhed the buying and ſelling of ſlaves; ſince that time, the eating of men, or ſacrificing them, has ſo greatly decreaſed on the eaſtern ſide of the peninſula, that now we ſcarcely hear of an inſtance of either of theſe that can be properly vouched. On the weſtern part, towards the Atlantic Ocean, where the ſale of ſlaves began a conſiderable time later, after the diſcovery of America and the Weſt Indies, both of theſe horrid practices are, as it were, general, though, I am told, leſs ſo to the northward ſince that event.

There is ſtill alive a man of the name of Matthews, who was preſent at one of thoſe bloody banquets on the weſt of Africa, to the northward of Senega. It is probable the continuation of the ſlave-trade would have aboliſhed theſe, in time, on the weſt ſide alſo. Many other reaſons could be alleged, did my plan permit it. But I ſhall content myſelf at preſent, with ſaying, that I very much fear that a relaxation and effeminacy of manners, rather than genuine tenderneſs of heart, has been the cauſe of this violent paroxyſm of philanthropy, and of ſome other meaſures adopted of late to the diſcouragement of diſcipline, which I do not doubt will ſoon be felt to contribute their mite to the decay both of trade and navigation that will neceſſarily follow.

The Ethiopian ſhepherds at firſt carried on the trade on their own ſide of the Red Sea; they carried their India commodities to Thebes, likewiſe to the

the different black nations to the ſouth-weſt; in return, they brought back gold, probably at a cheaper rate, becauſe certainly by a ſhorter carriage than by that from Ophir.

Thebes became exceedingly rich and proud, though, by the moſt extenſive area that ever was aſſigned to it, it never could be either large or populous. Thebes is not mentioned in ſcripture by that name; it was deſtroyed before the days of Moſes by Salatis prince of the Agaazi, or Ethiopian ſhepherds; at this day it has aſſumed a name very like the ancient one. The firſt ſignification of its name, Medinet Tabu, I thought was the Town of our Father. This, hiſtory ſays, was given it by Seſoſtris in honour of his father; in the ancient language, its name was *Ammon No.* The next that preſented itſelf was Theba, which was the Hebrew name for the Ark when Noah was ordered to build it—Thou ſhalt "make thee an Ark (Theba) of gopher-wood *."

The figure of the temples in Thebes do not ſeem to be far removed from the idea given us of the Ark. The third conjecture is, that being the firſt city built and ſupported on pillars, and, on different and ſeparate pieces of ſtone, it got its name from the architects firſt expreſſion of approbation or ſurpriſe, Tabu, that it ſtood inſulated and alone, and this ſeems to me to be the moſt conformable both to the Hebrew and Ethiopic.

The ſhepherds, for the moſt part, friends and allies of the Egyptians, or Cuſhite, at times were enemies to them. We need not, at this time of day,

* Gen. vi. 14.

day, ſeek the cauſe; there are many very apparent, from oppoſite manners, and, above all, the difference in the dietetique regimen. The Egyptians worſhipped the cow, the Shepherds killed and ate her. The Shepherds were Sabeans, worſhipping the hoſt of heaven—the ſun, moon, and ſtars. Immediately upon the building of Thebes and the perfection of ſculpture, idolatry and the groſſeſt materialiſm greatly corrupted the more pure and ſpeculative religion of the Sabeans. Soon after the building of Thebes, we ſee that Rachel, Abraham's wife, had idols *; we need ſeek no other probable cauſe of the devaſtation that followed, than difference of religion.

Thebes was deſtroyed by Salatis, who overturned the firſt Dynaſty of Cuſhite, or Egyptian kings, begun by Menes, in what is called the ſecond age of the world, and founded the firſt Dynaſty of the Shepherds, who behaved very cruelly, and wreſted the lands from their firſt owners; and it was this Dynaſty that Seſoſtris deſtroyed, after calling Thebes by his father's name, Ammon No, making thoſe decorations that we have ſeen of the harp in the ſepulchres on the weſt, and building Dioſpolis on the oppoſite ſide of the river. The ſecond conqueſt of Egypt by the Shepherds was that under Sabaco, by whom it has been imagined Thebes was deſtroyed, in the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah, who is ſaid to have made peace with So † king of Egypt, as the tranſlator has called him, miſtaking So for the name of the king, whereas it only denoted his quality of ſhepherd.

From

* Gen. xxxv. 4. † 2 Kings, xvii. 4.

From this it is plain, all that the ſcripture mentions about Ammon No, applies to Dioſpolis on the other ſide of the river. Ammon No and Dioſpolis, though they were on different ſides of the river, were conſidered as one city, thro' which the Nile flowed, dividing it into two parts. This is plain from profane hiſtory, as well as from the prophet Nahum *, who deſcribes it very exactly, if in place of the word *ſea* was ſubſtituted *river*, as it ought to be.

There was a third invaſion of the Shepherds after the building of Memphis, where a † king of Egypt ‡ is ſaid to have incloſed two hundred and forty thouſand of them in a city called *Abaris*; they ſurrendered upon capitulation, and were baniſhed the country into the land of Canaan. That two hundred and forty thouſand men ſhould be incloſed in one city, ſo as to bear a ſiege, ſeems to me extremely improbable; but be it ſo, all that it can mean is, that Memphis, built in Lower Egypt near the Delta, had war with the Shepherds of the Iſthmus of Suez, or the diſtricts near them, as thoſe of Thebes had before with the Shepherds of the Thebaid. But, however much has been written upon the ſubject, the total expulſion of the Shepherds at any one time by any King of Egypt, or at any one place, muſt be fabulous, as they have remained in their ancient ſeats, and do remain to this day; perhaps in not ſo great a number as when the India trade was carried on by the Arabian Gulf,



* Nahum, chap. iii. 8. † Miſpragmuthoſis.
‡ Manethon, apud Joſephum. Apion, lib. 1. p. 460.

yet ſtill in greater numbers than any other nation of the Continent.

The mountains which the Agaazi inhabit, are called *Habab*, from which it comes, that they themſelves have got that name. Habab, in their language, and in Arabic likewiſe, ſignifies a *ſerpent*, and this I ſuppoſe explains that hiſtorical fable in the book of Axum, which ſays, a ſerpent conquered the province of Tigré, and reigned there.

It may be aſked, Is there no other people that inhabit Abyſſinia, but theſe two nations, the Cuſhites and the Shepherds? Are there no other nations, whiter or fairer than them, living to the ſouthward of the Agaazi? Whence did theſe come? At what time, and by what name are they called? To this I anſwer, That there are various nations which agree with this deſcription, who have each a particular name, and who are all known by that of *Habeſh*, in Latin *Convenæ*, ſignifying a number of diſtinct people meeting accidentally in one place. The word has been greatly miſunderſtood, and miſapplied, both by Scaliger and Ludolf, and a number of others; but nothing is more conſonant to the hiſtory of the country than the tranſlation I have given it, nor will the word itſelf bear any other.

The Chronicle of Axum, the moſt ancient repoſitory of the antiquities of that country, a book eſteemed, I ſhall not ſay how properly, as the firſt in authority after the holy ſcriptures, ſays, that between the creation of the world and the birth of our Saviour there were 5500 years *; that Abyſſinia had

* Eight years leſs than the Greeks and other followers of the Septuagint.

had never been inhabited till 1808 years before Chriſt; and 200 years after that, which was in the 1600, it was laid waſte by a flood, the face of the country much changed and deformed, ſo that it was denominated at that time Ourè Midre, or, *the country laid waſte*, or, as it is called in ſcripture itſelf, a land which the waters or floods had ſpoiled †; that about the 1400 year before Chriſt it was taken poſſeſſion of by a variety of people ſpeaking different languages, who, as they were in friendſhip with the Agaazi, or Shepherds, poſſeſſing the high country of Tigre, came and ſat down beſide them in a peaceable manner, each occupying the lands that were before him. This ſettlement is what the Chronicle of Axum calls *Angaba*, the entry and eſtabliſhment of theſe nations, which finiſhed the peopling of Abyſſinia.

Tradition further ſays, that they came from Paleſtine. All this ſeems to me to wear the face of truth. Some time after the year 1500, we know there happened a flood which occaſioned great devaſtation. Pauſanius ſays, that this flood happened in Ethiopia in the reign of Cecrops; and, about the 1490 before Chriſt, the Iſraelites entered the land of promiſe, under Caleb and Joſhua. We are not to wonder at the great impreſſion that invaſion made upon the minds of the inhabitants of Paleſtine. We ſee by the hiſtory of the harlot, that the different nations had been long informed by prophecies, current and credited among themſelves, that they were to be extirpated before the face of



† Iſaiah, chap. xviii. ver. 2.

the Iſraelites, who for ſome time had been hovering about their frontiers. But now when Joſhua had paſſed the Jordan, after having miraculouſly dried up the river * before his army had invaded Canaan, and had taken and deſtroyed Jericho, a panic ſeized the whole people of Syria and Paleſtine.

Theſe petty ſtates, many in number, and who had all different languages, ſeeing a conqueror with an immenſe army already in poſſeſſion of part of their country, and who did not conduct himſelf according to the laws of other conquerors, but put the vanquiſhed under ſaws and harrows of iron, and deſtroyed the men, women, and children, and ſometimes even the cattle, by the ſword, no longer could think of waiting the arrival of ſuch an enemy, but ſought for ſafety by ſpeedy flight or emigration. The Shepherds in Abyſſinia and Atbara were the moſt natural refuge theſe fugitives could ſeek; commerce muſt have long made them acquainted with each others manners, and they muſt have been already entitled to the rights of hoſpitality by having often paſſed through each other's country.

Procopius † mentions that two pillars were ſtanding in his time on the coaſt of Mauritania, oppoſite to Gibraltar, upon which were inſcriptions in the Phœnician tongue: "We are Canaanites, flying from the face of Joſhua, the ſon of Nun, "the *robber*:" A character they naturally gave him from the ferocity and violence of his manners.

Now,

* Joſhua, iii. 16. † Procop. de bello vind. lib. 2. cap. 10.

† A Mooriſh author, Ibn el Raquique, ſays, this inſcription was on a ſtone on a mountain at Carthage. Marmol. lib. ap. 25.

# Geez

መሐልየ፡ መሐልይ፡ ዝውእቱ፡ ዘሰ
ሎሞን፡ ይሰሰመኒ፡ በስሰመት፡ አፋሁ፡
አደም፡ አጥበትኪ፡ አምወይኒ፡፡ ወመ
ዓዘ፡ ሰፍረትኪ፡ ኢምኩሎ፡ አፈወ፡፡=፡
ዕፍረትሰ፡ ዘተሠውጠ፡ ሰመቢ፡፡ ወበ
እንተዝ፡ ደናግል፡ አፍቀሬክ፡፡ ወሰ
ሐበክ፡ ድኅሬክ፡ በመዓዘ፡ ዕፍሬትክ፡
ኔረወፅ፡፡ ሽብአኒ፡ ኒጥሦ፡ ውሰተ፡
ጽናሐ ፡፡ ኔተፋሠሕ፡ ወኔትሐሠደ፡
ብክ፡፡ ናሬቅር፡ አጥበተኪ፡ አምወይ
ኒ፡፡ ወናቱዕ፡ አፋትናትኪ፡፡ ጸአም፡
አኒ፡ ወሠናይት፡ አምአወልደ፡ ኢየሩ
ሰሌም፡፡ ከመ፡ ምጸአለት፡ ቈደር፡ ወ
ሐይመታት፡ ሰሎሞን፡፡ ኢትርአያኒ፡
እሰመ፡ አኒ፡ ሱሳም፡፡ እሰመ፡ ኢርአያ
ኒ፡ ፀሐይ፡፡ ደቂቀ፡ አምየ፡ ተበአሰ
በአኒቲአየ፡፡ አኒበረኒ፡ ዓቅቢት፡ ዓ
ፀደ፡ ወይኒዓፀደ፡ ወይኒ፡ ዘዚአያ፡
ኢዓቀብኩ፡፡ ኒጎረኒ፡ ዘአፋቀሬት፡
ኒፍሰየ፡፡ አይቴ፡ ትሬኢ፡ ወአይቴ፡
ትሰሊብ፡ ጊዜ፡ ቀትር፡ ከመ፡ ኢይኩ
ኒ፡ አኒዘ፡ አኒጌጊ፡ ውስተምርአ
የ፡ ከልአኒከ፡፡ አመ፡ ኢያአመርኪ፡
የአሰኪ፡ ሠናይት፡ አምአኒሰት፡ ፀ
ኢ፡ አኒቴ፡ ውስተ፡ ሰኩናሆሙ፡ ለ
መረዔት፡፡ ወሬአዲ፡ መሐስዓ፡ አሚ
ሌኪ፡፡ ውስተ፡ አዕፀደቲሆሙ፡ ለ
ኖሎት፡፡ ለፈረስዲ፡ ወለሰሬገአት፡
ሬረዖኒ፡፡ አሰተሚሰልኩኪ፡ አኒት፡
ኒቤየ፡፡

To face p. 36, Vol. II.

# Amhara

ይህ፡ ከምሰጋና፡ ያሚበልጸ፡ ምሰጋና፡
የሰሎዎኔ፡ ኔው፡፡ ባፋ፡ እሳሳም፡ ይ
ሰመናል፡፡ ኪወይኔ፡ ይልቅ፡ ጡቶች
ኩ፡ ይሰ፡ ይሳሱ፡፡ የሰቱሰዎ፡ ሰታ
ከሰቱ፡ ሁለ፡ ይሳላል፡፡ በስሜ፡ የት
ቅለቅለ፡ እምህ፡ እኔይ፡ ለቱ፡ ያስወ
ድይናል፡፡ እለዜህ፡ ቆናደት፡ ወደደ
ህ፡፡ ሁዋለከኔ፡ ትከተሌህ፡፡ በሸቴ
ህ፡ ኪተ፡ ሰኔቄደሰኔ፡፡ ኔጉሠ፡ ከጨ
ጉሳው፡ እጊሳኔ፡፡ ባኔች፡ ደእ፡ ይሰና
ለ፡፡ ጠቶትሰኔ፡ ኩወይኔ፡ ይልቅ፡ ከኔ
ወደስኔ፡፡ እኔቶኔ፡ መወደድ፡ ቅኔ፡
ኔገሬ፡ ኔው፡፡ ኸየሩሳሌዎ፡ ቆናጅት፡
ይለቅ፡ ጠቋረሽሰሁ፡፡ ከኔደ፡ ዘበኔ፡
ሳጅ፡ ከኔደ፡ ሰሎዎኔ፡ ድኔኳኔ፡ ከዎ
ሬ፡ ኔበረ፡፡ ጠቋሬሽሰሁና፡ እቅደኝ
ፀሐይ፡ ከሰየኝዎኖ፡፡ የናቴ፡ ሌጀች፡
ሰለኔ፡ ተጸሉ፡፡ ሠይኔ ጠብቋ፡ ብሎ፡
እኖሩኝ፡፡ የኔኔ፡ ወይኔ፡ እሌጠበቅሁ
መ፡ ሌቡኖዬ፡ የወደደችሆይ፡ ኔገረኝ፡
ወዴት፡ ትሳመሬለህ፡፡ ወዴት፡ ተት
ኛእህ፡፡ በቅትር፡ ጊዜ፡፡ እቅበዘበዝ፡
እኔደሌገኝ፡፡ ከጋሌኔጀናችህ፡ መኔ
ጎች፡፡ ሬሰሸኔ፡ ከሰወቅሸ፡፡ ከሴ
ቶች፡ የመታመሩ፡፡ የመኔጎችኔ፡
ሰኮና፡ ቀተእሸ፡ ውሙ፡፡ የፈየሴ
ትሸኔ፡ ጋቦት፡ ጠብቂ፡፡ በረኛች፡
ቦታ፡ ያሉኔ፡፡ ፈረሱኝ፡ የፈረዖኔ፡ ፈ
ረሰ፡፡ ሰሬገሰየኔ፡ የፈረዖኔ፡ ሰረ
ገለ፡፡

Now, if what theſe inſcriptions contain is true, it is much more credible, that the different nations, emigrating at that time, ſhould ſeek their ſafety near hand among their friends, rather than go to an immenſe diſtance to Mauritania, to riſk a precarious reception among ſtrangers, and perhaps that country not yet inhabited.

Upon viewing the ſeveral countries in which theſe nations have their ſettlements, it ſeems evident they were made by mutual conſent, and in peace; they are not ſeparated from each other by chains of mountains, or large and rapid rivers, but generally by ſmall brooks, dry the greateſt part of the year; by hillocks, or ſmall mounds of earth, or imaginary lines traced to the top of ſome mountain at a diſtance; theſe boundaries have never been diſputed or altered, but remain upon the old tradition to this day. Theſe have all different languages, as we ſee from ſcripture all the petty ſtates of Paleſtine had, but they have no letters, or written character, but the Geez, the character of the Cuſhite ſhepherd by whom they were firſt invented and uſed, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. I may add in further proof of their origin, that the curſe * of Canaan ſeems to have followed them, they have obtained no principality, but ſerved the kings of the Agaazi or Shepherds, have been hewers of wood and drawers of water, and ſo they ſtill continue.

The firſt and moſt conſiderable of theſe nations ſettled in a province called *Amhara*; it was, at firſt coming, as little known as the others; but, upon a revolution in the country, the king fled to that province, and there the court ſtaid many years, ſo that

* Gen. ix 25, 26, and 27. verſes.

that the Geez, or language of the Shepherds, was dropt, and retained only in writing, and as a dead language; the ſacred ſcriptures being in that language only, ſaved the Geez from going totally into diſuſe. The ſecond were the Agows of Damot, one of the ſouthern provinces of Abyſſinia, where they are ſettled immediately upon the ſources of the Nile. The third are the Agows of Laſta, or Tcheratz Agow, from Tchera, their principal habitation; theirs too is a ſeparate language; they are Troglodytes that live in caverns, and ſeem to pay nearly the ſame worſhip to the Siris, or Tacazzè, that thoſe of Damot pay to the Nile.

I take the old names of theſe two laſt-mentioned nations, to be ſunk in the circumſtances of this their new ſettlement, and to be a compound of two words Ag-oha, the Shepherds of the River, and I alſo imagine, that the idolatry they introduced in worſhip of the Nile, is a further proof that they came from Canaan, where they imbibed materialiſm in place of the pure Sabean worſhip of the Shepherds, then the only religion of this part of Africa.

The fourth is a nation bordering upon the ſouthern banks of the Nile near Damot. It calls itſelf Gafat, which ſignifies oppreſſed by violence, torn, expelled, or chaced away by force. If we were to follow the idea ariſing merely from this name, we might be led to imagine, that theſe were part of the tribes torn from Solomon's ſon and ſucceſſor, Rehoboam. This, however, we cannot do conſiſtent with the faith to be kept by a hiſtorian with his reader. The evidence of the people themſelves, and the tradition of the country, deny they ever were

were Jews, or ever concerned with that colony, brought with Menileck and the queen of Saba, which eſtabliſhed the Jewiſh hierarchy. They declare, that they are now Pagans, and ever were ſo; that they are partakers with their neighbours the Agows in the worſhip of the river Nile, the extent or particulars of which I cannot pretend to explain. —The fifth is a tribe, which, if we were to pay any attention to ſimilarity of names, we ſhould be apt to imagine we had found here in Africa a part of that great Gauliſh nation ſo widely extended in Europe and Aſia. A compariſon of their languages with what we know exiſts of the former, cannot but be very curious.—Theſe are the Galla, the moſt conſiderable of theſe nations, ſpecimens of whoſe language I have cited. This word, in their own language, ſignifies *Shepherd**; they ſay that formerly they lived on the borders of the ſouthern rains, within the ſouthern tropic; and that, like theſe in Atbara, they were carriers between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, and ſupplied the interior part of the peninſula with Indian commodities.

The hiſtory of this trade is unknown; it muſt have been little leſs ancient, and nearly as extenſive as the trade to Egypt and Arabia. It probably ſuffered diminution, when the mines of Sofala were given up, ſoon after the diſcovery of the new world. The Portugueſe found it ſtill flouriſhing, when they made

* Theſe people likewiſe call themſelves Agaazi, or Agagi, they have over-run the kingdom of Congo ſouth of the Line, and on the Atlantic Ocean, as the Galla have done that part of the kingdom of Adel and Abyſſinia, on the Eaſtern, or Indian Ocean. Purch. lib. ii. chap. 4. ſect. 8.

made their firſt conqueſts upon that coaſt; and they carry it on ſtill in an obſcure manner, but in the ſame tract to their ſettlements near Cape Negro on the weſtern ocean. From theſe ſettlements would be the proper place to begin to explore the interior parts of the peninſula, on both ſides of the ſouthern tropic, as protection and aſſiſtance could probably be got through the whole courſe of it, and very little ſkill in language would be neceſſary.

When no employment was found for this multitude of men and cattle, they left their homes, and proceeding northward, they found themſelves involved near the Line, in rainy, cold, and cloudy weather, where they ſcarcely ever ſaw the ſun. Impatient of ſuch a climate, they advanced ſtill farther, till about the year 1537, they appeared in great numbers in the province of Bali, abandoning the care of camels for the breeding of horſes. At preſent they are all cavalry. I avoid to ſay more of them in this place, as I ſhall be obliged to make frequent mention of them in the courſe of my narrative.

The Falaſha, too, are a people of Abyſſinia, having a particular language of their own; a ſpecimen of which I have alſo publiſhed, as the hiſtory of the people ſeems to be curious. I do not, however, mean to ſay of them, more than of the Galla, that this was any part of thoſe nations who fled from Paleſtine on the *invaſion* of Joſhua. For they are now, and ever were, Jews, and have traditions of their own as to their origin, and what reduced them to the preſent ſtate of ſeparation, as

we

we ſhall ſee hereafter, when I come to ſpeak of the tranſlation of the holy ſcripture.

In order to gratify ſuch as are curious in the ſtudy and hiſtory of language, I, with great pains and difficulty, got the whole book of the Canticles tranſlated into each of theſe languages, by prieſts eſteemed the moſt verſant in the language of each nation. As this barbarous polyglot is of too large a ſize to print, I have contented myſelf with copying ſix verſes of the firſt chapter in each language; but the whole book is at the ſervice of any perſon of learning that will beſtow his time in ſtudying it, and, for this purpoſe, I left it in the Britiſh Muſeum, under the direction of Sir Joſeph Banks, and the Biſhop of Carliſle.

Theſe *Convenæ*, as we have obſerved, were called *Habeſh*, a number of diſtinct nations meeting in one place. Scripture has given them a name, which, though it has been ill tranſlated, is preciſely *Convenæ*, both in the Ethiopic and Hebrew. Our Engliſh tranſlator calls them the *mingled people* *, whereas it ſhould be the *ſeparate nations*, who, though met and ſettled together, did not mingle, which is ſtrictly *Convenæ*. The inhabitants then who poſſeſſed Abyſſinia, from its ſouthern boundary to the tropic of Cancer, or frontiers of Egypt, were the Cuſhites, or poliſhed people, living in towns, firſt Troglodytes, having their habitations in caves. The next were the Shepherds; after theſe were the nations who, as we apprehend, came from Paleſtine—Amhara, Agow of Damot, Agow of Tchera, and Gafat.

Interpreters,

* Jerem. chap. xiii. ver. 23.—id. xxv. 14.—Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 5.

Interpreters, much leſs acquainted with the hiſtorical circumſtances of theſe countries than the prophets, have, either from ignorance or inattention, occaſioned an obſcurity which otherwiſe did not ariſe from the text. All theſe people are alluded to in ſcripture by deſcriptions that cannot be miſtaken. If they have occaſioned doubts or difficulties, they are all to be laid at the door of the tranſlators, chiefly the Septuagint. When Moſes returned with his wife Zipporah, daughter of the ſovereign of the Shepherds of Midian, carriers of the India trade from Saba into Paleſtine, and eſtabliſhed near their principal mart Edom, in Idumea or Arabia, Aaron, and Miriam his ſiſter, quarrelled with Moſes, becauſe he had married one who was, as the tranſlator ſays, an Ethiopian *. There is no ſenſe in this cauſe; Moſes was a fugitive when he married Zipporah; ſhe was a noble-woman, daughter of the prieſt of Midian, head of a people. She likewiſe, as it would ſeem, was a Jeweſs †, and more attentive, at that time, to the preſervation of the precepts of the law, than Moſes was himſelf; no exception, then, could lie againſt Zipporah, as ſhe was ſurely, in every view, Moſes's ſuperior. But if the tranſlator had rendered it, that Aaron and Miriam had quarrelled with Moſes, becauſe he had married a *negro*, or *black-moor*, the reproach was evident; whatever intrinſic merit Zipporah might have been found to have poſſeſſed afterwards, ſhe muſt have appeared before the people, at firſt ſight, as a *ſtrange* woman, or Gentile, whom it was

* Numb. xii. 1. † Exod. iv. 25.

was prohibited to marry. Beſides, the innate deformity of the complexion, negroes were, at all times, rather coveted for companions of men of luxury or pleaſure, than ſought after for wives of ſober legiſlators, and governors of a people.

The next inſtance I ſhall give is, Zerah of Gerar*, who came to fight Aſa king of Iſrael with an army of a million of men, and three hundred chariots, whilſt both the quarrel and the deciſion are repreſented as immediate.

Gerar was a ſmall diſtrict, producing only the Acacia or gum-arabic trees, from which it had its name; it had no water but what came from a few wells, part of which had been dug by Abraham †, after much ſtrife with the people of the country, who ſought to deprive him of them, as of a treaſure.

Abraham and his brother Lot returning from Egypt, though poor ſhepherds, could not ſubſiſt there for want of food and water, and they ſeparated accordingly, by conſent ‡. Now it muſt be confeſſed, as it is not pretended there was any miracle here, that there is not a more unlikely tale in all Herodotus, than this muſt be allowed to be upon the footing of the tranſlation. The tranſlator calls Zerah an Ethiopian, which ſhould either mean he dwelt in Arabia, as he really did, and this gave him no advantage, or elſe that he was a ſtranger, who originally came from the country above Egypt; and, either way, it would have been impoſſible, during his whole life-time, to have collected a million of men, one of the greateſt armies that ever ſtood

* 2 Chron. chap. xiv. ver. 9. † Gen. chap. 21. ver. 30.
‡ Gen. chap. 13. ver. 6. and 9.

ſtood upon the face of the earth, nor could he have fed them though they had ate the whole trees that grew in his country, nor could he have given every hundredth man one drink of water in a day from all the wells he had in his country.

Here, then, is an obvious triumph for infidelity, becauſe, as I have ſaid, no ſupernatural means are pretended. But had it been tranſlated, that Zerah was a *black-moor*, a *Cuſhite-negro*, and prince of the Cuſhites, that were carriers in the Iſthmus, an Ethiopian ſhepherd, then the wonder ceaſed.—Twenty camels, employed to carry couriers upon them, might have procured that number of men to meet in a ſhort ſpace of time, and, as Zerah was the aggreſſor, he had time to chooſe when he ſhould attack his enemy; every one of theſe ſhepherds carrying with them their proviſion of flour and water, as is their invariable cuſtom, might have fought with Aſa at Gerar, without eating a loaf of Zerah's bread, or drinking a pint of his water.

The next paſſage I ſhall mention is the following: "The labour of Egypt, and merchandiſe of Ethio-"pia, and of the Sabeans, men of ſtature, ſhall "come over unto thee, and they ſhall be thine *." Here the ſeveral nations are diſtinctly and ſeparately mentioned in their places, but the whole meaning of the paſſage would have been loſt, had not the ſituation of theſe nations been perfectly known; or, had not the Sabeans been mentioned ſeparately, for both the Sabeans and the Cuſhite were certainly Ethiopians. Now, the meaning of the verſe is, that

* Iſa. chap. xlv. ver. 14.

that the fruit of the agriculture of Egypt, which is wheat, the commodities of the negro, gold, ſilver, ivory, and perfumes, would be brought by the Sabean ſhepherds, their carriers, a nation of great power, which ſhould join themſelves with you.

Again, Ezekiel ſays, † "And they ſhall know "that I am the Lord, when I have ſet a fire in "Egypt, and when all her helpers ſhall be deſ- "troyed."—"In that day ſhall meſſengers go forth "from me in ſhips, to make the careleſs Ethiopians "afraid." Now, Nebuchadnezzar was to deſtroy Egypt ‡, from the frontiers of Paleſtine, to the mountains above Atbara, where the Cuſhite dwelt. Between this and Egypt is a great deſert; the country beyond it, and on both ſides, was poſſeſſed by half a million of men. The Cuſhite, or negro merchant, was ſecure under theſe circumſtances from any inſult by land, but they were open to the ſea, and had no defender, and meſſengers, therefore, in ſhips or a fleet had eaſy acceſs to them, to alarm and keep them at home, that they did not fall into danger by marching into Egypt againſt Nebuchadnezzar, or interrupting the ſervice upon which God had ſent him. But this does not appear from tranſlating Cuſh, *Ethiopian;* the neareſt Ethiopian to Nebuchadnezzar, the moſt powerful and capable of oppoſing him, were the Ethiopian ſhepherds of the Thebaid, and theſe were not acceſſible to ſhips; and the ſhepherds, ſo poſted near to the ſcene of deſtruction to be committed by Nebuchadnezzar, were enemies to the Cuſhites living in towns, and they had repeatedly themſelves deſtroyed

† Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 8 and 9. ‡ Ezek. chap. xxix. ver. 10.

deſtroyed them, and therefore had no temptation to be other than ſpectators.

In ſeveral other places, the ſame prophet ſpeaks of Cuſh as the commercial nation, ſympathiſing with their countrymen dwelling in the towns in Egypt, independent of the ſhepherds, who were really their enemies, both in civil and religious matters. "And the ſword ſhall come upon "Egypt, and great pain ſhall be in Ethiopia, when "the ſlain ſhall fall in Egypt *." Now Ethiopia, as I have before ſaid, that is, the low country of the ſhepherds, neareſt Egypt, had no common cauſe with the Cuſhites that lived in towns there; it was their countrymen, the Cuſhites in Ethiopia, who mourned for thoſe that fell in Egypt, who were merchants, traders, and dwelt in cities like themſelves.

I ſhall mention but one inſtance more: "Can the "Ethiopian change his ſkin, or the leopard his "ſpots?†" Here Cuſh is rendered Ethiopian, and many Ethiopians being white, it does not appear why they ſhould be fixed upon, or choſen for the queſtion more than other people. But had Cuſh been tranſlated Negro, or Black-moor, the queſtion would have been very eaſily underſtood, Can the negro change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots?

Jeremiah ‡ ſpeaks of the chiefs of the mingled people that dwell in the deſerts. And Ezekiel § alſo mentions them independent of all the others, whether Shepherds, or Cuſhites, or Libyans their neighbours, by the name of the Mingled People.

Iſaiah

* Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 4. † Jerem. chap. xiii. ver. 23.
‡ Jerem. chap. xxv. ver. 24. § Ezek. chap. xxx. ver. 5.

Iſaiah * calls them " a nation ſcattered and peeled; " a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; " a nation meted out and trodden down, whoſe " land the rivers have ſpoiled:" which is a ſufficient deſcription of them, as having been expelled their own country, and ſettled in one that had ſuffered greatly by a deluge a ſhort time before.

* Iſa. chap. xviii. ver. 2.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Origin of Characters or Letters—Ethiopic the firſt Language—How and why the Hebrew Letter was formed.*

THE reader will obſerve what I have already ſaid concerning the language of Habeſh, or the Mingled nations, that they have not characters of their own; but when written, which is very ſeldom, it muſt be by uſing the Geez alphabet. Kircher, however, ſays, there are two characters to be found in Abyſſinia; one he calls the Sacred Old Syrian, the other the Vulgar, or Common Geez character, of which we are now ſpeaking. But this is certainly a miſtake; there never was, that I know, but two original characters which obtained in Egypt. The firſt was the Geez, the ſecond the Saitic, and both theſe were the oldeſt characters in the world, and both derived from hieroglyphics.

Although it is impoſſible to avoid ſaying ſomething here of the origin of languages, the reader muſt not expect that I ſhould go very deep into the faſhionable opinions concerning them, or believe that all the old deities of the Pagan nations were the patriarchs of the Old Teſtament. With all reſpect to Sanchoniatho and his followers, I can no more believe that Oſiris, the firſt king of Egypt, was a real perſonage, and that Tot was his ſecretary, than I can believe Saturn to be the patriarch Abraham,

ham, and Rachel and Leah, Venus and Minerva. I will not fatigue the reader with a detail of uſeleſs reaſons; if Oſiris is a real perſonage, if he was king of Egypt, and Tot his ſecretary, they ſurely travelled to very good purpoſe, as all the people of Europe and Aſia ſeem to be agreed, that in perſon they firſt communicated letters and the art of writing to them, but at very different, and very diſtant periods.

Thebes was built by a colony of Ethiopians from Siré, the city of Seir, or the Dog Star. Diodorus Siculus ſays, that the Greeks, by putting O before Siris, had made the word unintelligible to the Egyptians: Siris, then, was Oſiris; but he was not the Sun, no more than he was Abraham, nor was he a real perſonage. He was Syrius, or the dog-ſtar, deſigned under the figure of a dog, becauſe of the warning he gave to Atbara, where the firſt obſervations were made at his heliacal riſing, or his diſengaging himſelf from the rays of the ſun, ſo as to be viſible to the naked eye. He was the Latrator Anubis, and his firſt appearance was figuratively compared to the barking of a dog, by the warning it gave to prepare for the approaching inundation. I believe, therefore, this was the firſt hieroglyphic; and that Iſis, Oſiris, and Tot, were all after inventions relating to it; and in ſaying this, I am ſo far warranted, becauſe there is not in Axum (once a large city) any other hieroglyphic but of the dog-ſtar, as far as I can judge from the huge fragments of figures of this animal, remains of which, in different poſtures, are ſtill diſtinctly to be ſeen upon the pedeſtals everywhere among the ruins.

It is not to be doubted, that hieroglyphics then, but not aſtronomy, were invented at Thebes, where the theory of the dog-ſtar was particularly inveſtigated, becauſe connected with their rural year. Ptolemy* has preſerved us an obſervation of an heliacal riſing of Sirius on the 4th day after the ſummer ſolſtice, which anſwers to the 2250 year before Chriſt; and there are great reaſons to believe the Thebans were good practical aſtronomers long before that period†; early, as it may be thought, this gives to Thebes a much greater antiquity than does the chronicle of Axum juſt cited.

As ſuch obſervations were to be of ſervice for ever, they became more valuable and uſeful in proportion to their priority. The moſt ancient of them would be of uſe to the aſtronomers of this day, for Sir Iſaac Newton appeals to theſe of Chiron the Centaur. Equations may indeed be diſcovered in a number of centuries, which, by reaſon of the ſmallneſs of their quantities, may very probably have eſcaped the moſt attentive and ſcrupulous care of two or three generations; and many alterations in the ſtarry firmament, old ſtars being nearly extinguiſhed, and new emerging, would appear from a comparative ſtate of the heavens made for a ſeries of ages. And a Theban *Herſchel*‡ would have given us the hiſtory of planets he then obſerved, which, after appearing for ages, are now viſible no more, or have taken a different form.

The dial, or gold circle of Oſimandyas, ſhews what an immenſe progreſs they had made in aſtronomy

* Uranologion. P. Petau. † Banbridge, Ann. canicul.

‡ An aſtronomer greatly above my praiſe.

nomy in ſo little time. This, too, is a proof of an early fall and revival of the arts in Egypt, for the knowledge and uſe of Armillæ had been loſt with the deſtruction of Thebes, and were not again diſcovered, that is, revived, till the reign of Ptolemy Soter, 300 years before the Chriſtian æra. I conſider that immenſe quantity of hieroglyphics, with which the walls of the temples, and faces of the obeliſks, are covered, as containing ſo many aſtronomical obſervations.

I look upon theſe as the ephemerides of ſome thouſand years, and that ſufficiently accounts for their number. Their date and accuracy were indiſputable; they were exhibited in the moſt public places, to be conſulted as occaſion required; and by the deepneſs of the engraving, and hardneſs of the materials, and the thickneſs and ſolidity of the block itſelf upon which they were carved, they bade defiance at once to violence and time.

I know that moſt of the learned writers are of ſentiments very different from mine in theſe reſpects. They look for myſteries and hidden meanings, moral and philoſophical treatiſes, as the ſubjects of theſe hieroglyphics. A ſceptre, they ſay, is the hieroglyphic of a king. But where do we meet a ſceptre upon an antique Egyptian monument? or who told us this was an emblem of royalty among the Egyptians at the time of the firſt invention of this figurative writing? Again, the ſerpent with the tail in its mouth denotes the eternity of God, that he is without beginning and without end. This is a Chriſtian truth, and a Chriſtian belief, but no where to be found in the polytheiſm of the inventors

of hieroglyphics. Was Cronos or Ouranus without beginning and without end? Was this the caſe with Oſiris and Tot, whoſe fathers and mothers births and marriages are known? If this was a truth, independent of revelation, and imprinted from the beginning in the minds of men; if it was deſtined to be an eternal truth, which muſt have appeared by every man finding it in his own breaſt, from the beginning, how unneceſſary muſt the trouble have been to write a common known truth like this, at the expence of ſix weeks labour, upon a table of porphyry or granite.

It is not with philoſophy as with aſtronomy; the older the obſervations, the more uſe they are of to poſterity. A lecture of an Egyptian prieſt upon divinity, morality, or natural hiſtory, would not pay the trouble, at this day, of engraving it upon ſtone; and one of the reaſons that I think no ſuch ſubjects were ever treated in hieroglyphics is, that in all thoſe I ever had an opportunity of ſeeing, and very few people have ſeen more, I have conſtantly found the ſame figures repeated, which obviouſly, and without diſpute, allude to the hiſtory of the Nile, and its different periods of increaſe, the mode of meaſuring it, the Eteſian winds; in ſhort, ſuch obſervations as we every day ſee in an almanack, in which we cannot ſuppoſe, that forſaking the obvious import, where the good they did was evident, they ſhould aſcribe different meanings to the hieroglyphic, to which no key has been left, and therefore their future inutility muſt have been foreſeen.

I ſhall content myſelf in this wide field, to fix upon one famous hieroglyphical perſonage, which is

*Tot,*

*Tot*, the ſecretary of Oſiris, whoſe function I ſhall endeavour to explain; if I fail, I am in good company; I give it only as my opinion, and ſubmit it cheerfully to the correction of others. The word *Tot* is Ethiopic, and there can be little doubt it means the dog-ſtar. It was the name given to the firſt month of the Egyptian year. The meaning of the name, in the language of the province of Sirè, is an *idol*, compoſed of different heterogeneous pieces; it is found having this ſignification in many of their books. Thus a naked man is not a *Tot*, but the body of a naked man, with a dog's head, an aſs's head, or a ſerpent inſtead of a head, is a *Tot*. According to the import of that word, it is I ſuppoſe, an almanack, or ſection of the phænomena in the heavens which are to happen in the limited time it is made to comprehend, when expoſed for the information of the public; and the more extenſive its uſe is intended to be, the greater number of emblems, or ſigns of obſervation, it is charged with.

Beſides many other emblems or figures, the common Tot, I think, has in his hand a croſs with a handle, as it is called *Crux Anſata*, which has occaſioned great ſpeculation among the decypherers. This croſs, fixed to a circle, is ſuppoſed to denote the *four elements*, and to be the ſymbol of the influence the ſun has over them. Jamblichus * records, that this croſs, in the hand of Tot, is the name of the *divine Being* that travels through the world. Sozomen † thinks it means the *life* to come, the

* Jamblich. de Myſt. ſect. 8. cap. 5.

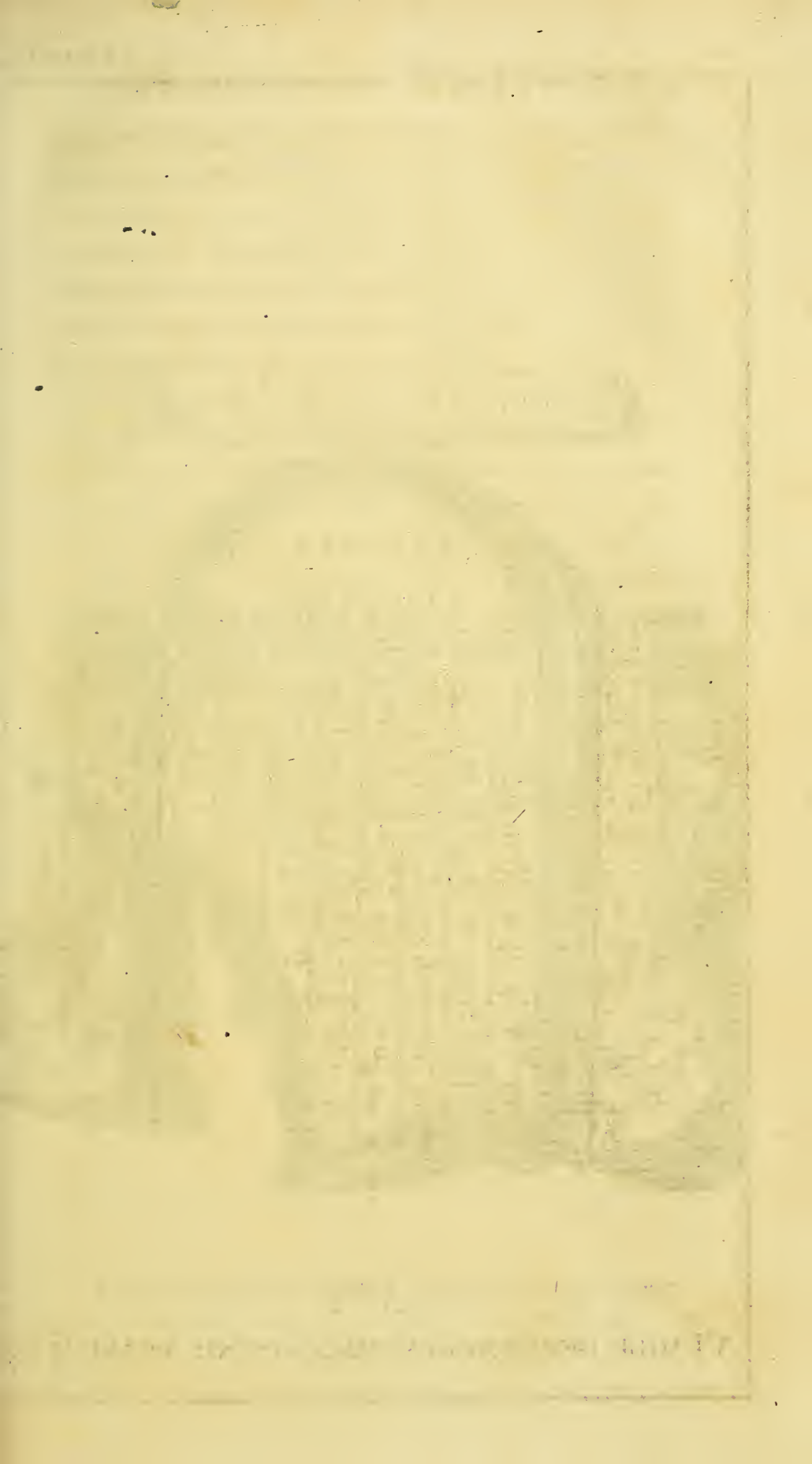
† Sozomen, Eccles. Hiſt. lib. 7. cap. 15.

the ſame with the ineffable image of eternity. Others, ſtrange difference! ſay it is the *phallus*, or human genitals, while a later * writer maintains it to be the mariner's compaſs. My opinion, on the contrary is, that, as this figure was expoſed to the public for the reaſon I have mentioned, the Crux Anſata in his hand was nothing elſe but a monogram of his own name TO, and $\overset{O}{TT}$ ſignifying TOT, or as we write Almanack upon a collection publiſhed for the ſame purpoſe.

The changing of theſe emblems, and the multitude of them, produced the neceſſity of contracting their ſize, and this again a conſequential alteration in the original forms; and a ſtile, or ſmall portable inſtrument, became all that was neceſſary for finiſhing theſe ſmall *Tots*, inſtead of a large graver or carving tool, employed in making the large ones. But men, at laſt, were ſo much uſed to the alteration, as to know it better than under its primitive form, and the engraving became what we may call the firſt elements, or root, in preference to the original.

The reader will ſee, that, in my hiſtory of the civil wars in Abyſſinia, the king, forced by rebellion to retire to the province of Tigré, and being at Axum, found a ſtone covered with hieroglyphics, which, by the many inquiries I made after inſcriptions, and ſome converſations I had had with him, he gueſſed was of the kind which I wanted. Full of that princely goodneſs and condeſcenſion that he ever honoured me with, throughout my whole ſtay,

* Herw. theolog. Ethnica, p. 11.



*N.° 2*

A TABLE OF *HIEROGLYPHICS*, FOUND AT AXUM 1771.

ſtay, he brought it with him when he returned from Tigré, and was reſtored to his throne at Gondar.

It ſeems to me to be one of thoſe private Tots, or portable almanacks, of the moſt curious kind. The length of the whole ſtone is fourteen inches, and ſix inches broad, upon a baſe three inches high, projecting from the block itſelf, and covered with hieroglyphics. A naked figure of a man, near ſix inches, ſtands upon upon two crocodiles, their heads turned different ways. In each of his hands he holds two ſerpents, and a ſcorpion, all by the tail, and in the right hand hangs a nooſe, in which is ſuſpended a ram or goat. On the left hand he holds a lion by the tail. The figure is in great relief; and the head of it with that kind of cap or ornament which is generally painted upon the head of the figure called Iſis, but this figure is that of a man. On each ſide of the whole-length figure, and above it, upon the face of the ſtone where it projects, are marked a number of hieroglyphics of all kinds. Over this is a very remarkable repreſentation; it is an old head, with very ſtrong features, and a large buſhy beard, and upon it a high cap ribbed or ſtriped. This I take to be the Cnuph, or Animus Mundi, though Apuleus, with very little probability, ſays this was made in the likeneſs of no creature whatever. The back of the ſtone is divided into eight compartments *, from the top to the bottom, and theſe are filled with hieroglyphics in

* I apprehend this is owing to the circumſtances of the climate, in the four months, the time of the inundation, the heavens were ſo covered as to afford no obſervations to be recorded.

in the laſt ſtage, before they took the entire reſemblance of letters. Many are perfectly formed; the Crux Anſata appears in one of the compartments, and Tot in another. Upon the edge, juſt above where it is broken, is 1119, ſo fair and perfect in form, that it might ſerve as an example of caligraphy, even in the preſent times; 45 and 19, and ſome other arithmetical figures, are found up and down among the hieroglyphics.

This I ſuppoſe was what formerly the Egyptians called a book, or almanack; a collection of theſe was probably hung up in ſome conſpicuous place, to inform the public of the ſtate of the heavens, and ſeaſons, and diſeaſes, to be expected in the courſe of them, as is the caſe in the Engliſh almanacks at this day. Hermes is ſaid to have compoſed 36,535 books, probably of this ſort, or they might contain the correſpondent aſtronomical obſervations made in a certain time at Meroë, Ophir, Axum, or Thebes, communicated to be hung up for the uſe of the neighbouring cities. Porphyry * gives a particular account of the Egyptian almanacks, "What is compriſed in the Egyptian almanacks, ſays he, contains but a ſmall part of the Hermaic inſtitutions; all that relates to the riſing and ſetting of the moon and planets, and of the ſtars and their influence, and alſo ſome advice upon diſeaſes."

It is very remarkable, that, beſides my Tot here deſcribed, there are five or ſix, preciſely the ſame in all reſpects, already in the Britiſh Muſeum; one of them, the largeſt of the whole, is made of ſycamore, the others are of metal. There is another, I am told, in Lord Shelburn's collection; this I never

* Porpyhry Epiſt. ad Anebonem.

ver, had an opportunity of ſeeing; but a very principal attention ſeems to have been paid to make all of them light and portable, and it would ſeem that by theſe having been formed ſo exactly ſimilar, they were the Tots intended to be expoſed in different cities or places, and were neither more nor leſs than Egyptian almanacks.

Whether letters were known to Noah before the flood, is no where ſaid from any authority, and the inquiry into it is therefore uſeleſs. It is difficult, in my opinion, to imagine, that any ſociety, engaged in different occupations, could ſubſiſt long without them. There ſeems to be leſs doubt, that they were invented, ſoon after the diſperſion, long before Moſes, and in common uſe among the Gentiles of his time.

It ſeems alſo probable, that the firſt alphabet was Ethiopic, firſt founded on hieroglyphics, and afterwards modelled into more current, and leſs laborious figures, for the ſake of applying them to the expedition of buſineſs. Mr. Fourmont is ſo much of this opinion, that he ſays it is evident the three firſt letters of the Ethiopic alphabet are hieroglyphics yet, and that the Beta reſembles the door of a houſe or temple. But, with great ſubmiſſion, the doors of houſes and temples, when firſt built, were ſquare at the top, for arches were not known. The Beta was taken from the doors of the firſt Troglodytes in the mountains, which were rounded, and gave the hint for turning the arch, when architecture advanced nearer to perfection.

Others are for giving to letters a divine original: they ſay they were taught to Abraham by God himſelf;

himſelf; but this is no where vouched; though it cannot be denied, that it appears from ſcripture there were two ſorts of characters known to Moſes, when God ſpoke to him on Mount Sinai. The firſt two tables, we are told, were wrote by the finger of God, in what character is not ſaid, but Moſes received them to read to the people, ſo he ſurely underſtood them. But, when he had broken theſe two tables, and had another meeting with God on the mount on the ſubject of the law, God directs him ſpecially not to write in the Egyptian character or hieroglyphics, but in the current hand uſed by the Ethiopian merchants, *like the letters* upon a ſignet; that is, he ſhould not write in hieroglyphics by a *picture*, repreſenting the *thing*, for that the law forbids; and the bad conſequences of this were evident; but he ſhould write the law in the current hand, by characters repreſenting ſounds, (though nothing elſe in heaven or on earth,) or by the letters that the Iſhmaelites, Cuſhites, and India trading nations had long uſed in buſineſs for ſigning their invoices, engagements, &c. and this was the meaning of being *like the letters of a ſignet.*

Hence, it is very clear, that God did not invent letters, nor did Moſes, who underſtood both characters before the promulgation of the law upon Mount Sinai, having learned them in Egypt, and during his long ſtay among the Cuſhites, and Shepherds in Arabia Petrea. Hence it ſhould appear alſo, that the ſacred character of the Egyptian was conſidered as profane, and forbid to the Hebrews, and that the common Ethiopic was the Hebrew ſacred character, in which the copy of the law was

firſt

firſt wrote. The text is very clear and explicit: "And the ſtones ſhall be with the *names* of the "children of Iſrael, twelve, according to their "*names*, *like* the engravings of a *ſignet*; every one "with his *name*, ſhall they be according to the "twelve tribes*." Which is plainly, You ſhall not write in the way uſed till this day, for it leads the people into idolatry; you ſhall not type Judah by a *lion*, Zebulun by a *ſhip*, Iſſachar by an *aſs* couching between two burdens; but, inſtead of writing by pictures, you ſhall take the other known hand, the merchants writing, which ſignifies *ſounds*, not *things*; write the names Judah, Zebulun, Iſſachar, in the letters, ſuch as the merchants uſe upon their ſignets. And, on Aaron's breaſt-plate of pure gold, was to be written, in the ſame alphabet, like the engravings of a ſignet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD †.

Theſe ſignets, of the remoteſt antiquity in the Eaſt, are worn ſtill upon every man's hand to this day, having the name of the perſon that wears them, or ſome ſentence upon it always religious. The Greeks, after the Egyptians, continued the other method, and deſcribed figures upon their ſignet; the uſe of both has been always common in Britain.

We find afterwards, that, in place of ſtone or gold, for greater convenience Moſes wrote in a book, "And it came to paſs, when Moſes had made "an end of writing the words of this law in a "book, until they were finiſhed ‡;"—

Although,

* Exod. chap. xxviii. ver. 21. † Exod. chap. xxviii. ver. 36.
‡ Deut. chap. xxxi. ver. 24.

Although, then, Moſes certainly did not invent either, or any character, it is probable that he made two, perhaps more, alterations in the Ethiopic alphabet as it then ſtood, with a view to increaſe the difference ſtill more between the writing then in uſe among the nations, and what he intended to be peculiar to the Jews. The firſt was altering the direction, and writing from right to left, whereas, the Ethiopian was, and is to this day, written from left to right, as was the hieroglyphical alphabet. * The ſecond was taking away the points, which, from all times, muſt have exiſted and been, as it were, a part of the Ethiopic letters invented with them, and I do not ſee how it is poſſible it ever could have been read without them; ſo that, which way ſoever the diſpute may turn concerning the antiquity of the application of the Maſoretic points, the invention was no new one, but did exiſt as early as language was written. And I apprehend, that theſe alterations were very rapidly adopted after the writing of the law, and applied to the new character as it then ſtood; becauſe, not long after, Moſes was ordered to ſubmit the law itſelf to the people, which would have been perfectly uſeleſs, had not reading and the character been familiar to them at that time.

It appears to me alſo, that the Ethiopic words were always ſeparated, and could not run together, or be joined as the Hebrew, and that the running the words together into one muſt have been matter of choice in the Hebrew, to increaſe the difference in writing the two languages, as the contrary had been practiſed in the Ethiopian language. Though there

* Vide the hieroglyphics on the drawing of the ſtone.

there is really little reſemblance between the Ethiopic and the Hebrew letters, and not much more between that and the Samaritan, yet I have a very great ſuſpicion the languages were once much nearer a-kin than this diſagreement of their alphabet promiſes, and, for this reaſon, that a very great number of words are found throughout the Old Teſtament that have really no root, nor can be derived from any Hebrew origin, and yet all have, in the Ethiopic, a plain, clear, unequivocal origin, to and from which they can be traced without force or difficulty.

I ſhall now finiſh what I have to ſay upon this ſubject, by obſerving, that the Ethiopic alphabet conſiſts of twenty-ſix letters, each of theſe, by a virgula, or point annexed, varying in ſound, ſo as to become, in effect, forty-two diſtinct letters. But I muſt further add, that at firſt they had but twenty-five of theſe original letters, the Latin P being wanting, ſo that they were obliged to ſubſtitute another letter in the place of it. Paulus, for example, they called Taulus, Oulus, or Caulus. Petros they pronounced Ketros. At laſt they ſubſtituted T, and added this to the end of their alphabet, giving it the force of P, though it was really a repetition of a character, rather than invention. Beſides theſe there are twenty others of the nature of diphthongs, but I ſhould ſuppoſe ſome of theſe are not of the ſame antiquity with the letters of the alphabet, but have been invented in later times by the ſcribes for convenience.

The reader will underſtand, that, ſpeaking of the Ethiopic at preſent, I mean only the Geez language, the language of the Shepherds, and of the books.

books. None of the other many languages ſpoken in Abyſſinia have characters for writing. But when the Amharic became ſubſtituted, in common uſe and converſation, to the Geez, after the reſtoration of the Royal family, from their long baniſhment in Shoa, ſeven new characters were neceſſarily added to anſwer the pronunciation of this new language, but no book was ever yet written in any other language except Geez. On the contrary, there is an old law in this country, handed down by tradition only, that whoever ſhould attempt to tranſlate the holy ſcripture into Amharic, or any other language, his throat ſhould be cut after the manner in which they kill ſheep, his family ſold to ſlavery, and his houſe razed to the ground; and, whether the fear of this law was true or fained, it was a great obſtacle to me in getting thoſe tranſlations of the Song of Solomon made which I intend for ſpecimens of the different languages of thoſe diſtinct nations.

The Geez is exceedingly harſh and unharmonious. It is full of theſe two letters, D and T, on which an accent is put that nearly reſembles ſtammering. Conſidering the ſmall extent of ſea that divides this country from Arabia, we are not to wonder that it has great affinity to the Arabic. It is not difficult to be acquired by thoſe who underſtand any other of the oriental languages; and, for a reaſon I have given ſome time ago, that the roots of many Hebrew words are only to be found here, I think it abſolutely neceſſary to all thoſe that would obtain a critical ſkill in that language.

Wemmers, a Carmelite, has wrote a ſmall Ethiopic dictionary in thin quarto, which, as far as it goes, has conſiderable merit; and I am told there are others of the ſame kind extant, written chiefly by Catholic prieſts. But by far the moſt copious, diſtinct, and beſt-digeſted work, is that of Job Ludolf, a German of great learning in the Eaſtern languages, and who has publiſhed a grammar and dictionary of the Geez in folio. This read with attention is more than ſufficient to make any perſon of very moderate genius a great proficient in the Ethiopic language. He has likewiſe written a ſhort eſſay towards a dictionary and grammar of the Amharic, which, conſidering the very ſmall help he had, ſhews his ſurpriſing talents and capacity. Much, however, remains ſtill to do; and it is indeed ſcarcely poſſible to bring this to any tolerable degree of forwardneſs for want of books, unleſs a man of genius, while in the country itſelf, were to give his time and application to it: It is not much more difficult than the former, and leſs connected with the Hebrew or Arabic, but has a more harmonious pronunciation.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*Some Account of the Trade Winds and Monſoons—Application of this to the Voyage to Ophir and Tarſhiſh.*

IT is a matter of real affliction, which ſhews the vanity of all human attainments, that the preceding pages have been employed in deſcribing, and, as it were, drawing from oblivion, the hiſtory of thoſe very nations that firſt conveyed to the world, not the elements of literature only, but all ſorts of learning, arts, and ſciences in their full detail and perfection. We ſee that theſe had taken deep root, and were not eaſily extirpated. The firſt great and fatal blow they received was from the deſtruction of Thebes, and its monarchy, by the firſt invaſion of the ſhepherds under Salatis, which ſhook them to the very foundation. The next was in the conqueſt of the Thebaid under Sabaco and his Shepherds. The third was when the empire of Lower Egypt (I do not think of the Thebaid) was transferred to Memphis, and that city taken, as writers ſay, by the Shepherds of Abaris only, or of the Delta, though it is ſcarcely probable, that, in ſo favourite a cauſe as the deſtruction of cities, the whole Shepherds did not lend their aſſiſtance.

Theſe were the calamities, we may ſuppoſe, under which the arts in Egypt fell; for as to the foreign conqueſts of Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonians,

nians, they affected cities and the perſons of individuals only. They were temporary, never intended to have laſting conſequences; their beginning and end were propheſied at the ſame time. That of the Aſſyrians was a plundering expedition only, as we are told by ſcripture itſelf, intended to laſt but forty years *, half the life of man, given, for a particular purpoſe, for the indemnification of the king Nebuchadnezzar, for the hardſhips he ſuſtained at the ſiege of Tyre, where the obſtinacy of the inhabitants, in deſtroying their wealth, deprived the conqueror of his expected booty. The Babylonians were a people the moſt poliſhed after the Egytians. Egypt under them ſuffered by rapacity, but not by ignorance, as it did in all the conqueſts of the Shepherds.

After Thebes was deſtroyed by the firſt Shepherds commerce, and it is probable the arts with it, fled for a time from Egypt, and centered in Edom, a city and territory, tho' we know little of its hiſtory, at that period the richeſt in the world. David, in the very neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, calls Edom the ſtrong city; "Who will bring me "into the ſtrong city? Who will lead me into "Edom †?" David, from an old quarrel, and probably from the recent inſtigations of the Tyrians his friends, invaded Edom ‡, deſtroyed the city, and diſperſed the people. He was the great military power then upon the continent; Tyre and Edom were rivals; and his conqueſt of that laſt great and trading ſtate, which he united to his em-



* Ezek. chap. xxix. ver. 11. † Pſalm. chap. lx. ver. 9. and Pſal. cviii. ver. 10. ‡ 2 Sam. chap. viii. ver. 14. 1 King's chap. xi. ver. 15, 16.

pire, would yet have loſt him the trade he ſought to cultivate, by the very means he uſed to obtain it, had not Tyre been in a capacity to ſucceed to Edom, and collect its mariners and artificers, ſcattered abroad by the conqueſt.

David took poſſeſſion of two ports, Eloth and Ezion-gaber *, from which he carried on the trade to Ophir and Tarſhiſh, to a very great extent, to the day of his death. We are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment when we reflect upon the ſum that Prince received in ſo ſhort a time from theſe mines of Ophir. For what is ſaid to be given by King David † and his Princes for the building of the Temple of Jeruſalem, exceeds in value eight hundred millions of our money, if the talent there ſpoken of is a Hebrew talent ‡, and not a weight of the ſame denomination, the value of which was leſs, and peculiarly reſerved for and uſed in the traffic of theſe precious metals, gold and ſilver. It was, probably, an African or Indian weight, proper to the ſame mines, whence was gotten the gold appropriated to fine commodities only, as is the caſe with our ounce Troy different from the Averdupoiſe.

Solomon,

* 1 Kings, chap. ix. ver. 26. 2 Chron. chap viii. ver. 17.

† 1 Chron. chap. xxii ver. 14, 13, 16. Chap. xxix. ver. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.—Three thouſand *Hebrew* talents of gold, reduced to our money, amount to twenty-one millions and ſix hundred thouſand pounds Sterling.

‡ The value of a Hebrew talent appears from Exodus, chap. xxxviii. ver. 25, 26. For 603,550 perſons being taxed at half a ſhekel each, they muſt have paid in the whole 301,775; now that ſum is ſaid to amout to 100 talents, 1775 ſhekels only; deduct the two latter ſums, and there will remain 300,000, which, divided by 108, will leave 3000 ſhekels for each of theſe talents.

Solomon, who ſucceeded David in his kingdom, was his ſucceſſor likewiſe in the friendſhip of Hiram king of Tyre. Solomon viſited Eloth and Ezion-gaber * in perſon, and fortified them. He collected a number of pilots, ſhipwrights, and mariners, diſperſed by his father's conqueſt of Edom, moſt of whom had taken refuge in Tyre and Sidon, the commercial ſtates in the Mediterranean. Hiram ſupplied him with ſailors in abundance; but the ſailors ſo furniſhed from Tyre were not capable of performing the ſervice which Solomon required, without the direction of pilots and mariners uſed to the navigation of the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Such were thoſe mariners who formerly lived in Edom, whom Solomon had now collected in Eloth and Ezion-gaber.

This laſt mentioned navigation was very different in all reſpects from that of the Mediterranean, which, in reſpect to the former, might be compared to a pond, every ſide being confined with ſhores little diſtant the one from the other; even that ſmall extent of ſea was ſo full of iſlands, that there was much greater art required in the pilot to avoid land than to reach it. It was, beſides, ſubject to variable winds, being to the northward of 30° of latitude, the limits to which Providence hath confined thoſe winds all over the globe; whereas the navigation of the Indian Ocean was governed by laws more convenient and regular, though altogether different from thoſe that obtained in the Mediterranean. Before I proceed, it will be neceſſary to explain this phænomenon.



* 2 Chron. chap. viii. ver. 17.

It is known to all thoſe who are ever ſo little verſant in the hiſtory of Egypt, that the wind from the north prevails in that valley all the ſummer months, and is called the *Eteſian winds*; it ſweeps the valley from north to ſouth, that being the direction of Egypt, and of the Nile, which runs through the midſt of it. The two chains of mountains, which confine Egypt on the eaſt and on the weſt, conſtrain the wind to take this preciſe direction.

It is natural to ſuppoſe the ſame would be the caſe in the Arabian Gulf, had that narrow ſea been in a direction parallel to the land of Egypt, or due north and ſouth. The Arabian Gulf, however, or what we call the Red Sea, lies from nearly north-weſt to ſouth-eaſt, from Suez to Mocha. It then turns nearly eaſt and weſt till it joins the Indian Ocean at the Straits of Babelmandeb, as we have already ſaid, and may be further ſeen by conſulting the map. Now, the Eteſian winds, which are due north in Egypt, here take the direction of the Gulf, and blow in that direction ſteadily all the ſeaſon, while it continues north in the valley of Egypt; that is, from April to October the wind blows north-weſt up the Arabian Gulf towards the Straits; and, from November till March, directly contrary, down the Arabian Gulf, from the Straits of Babelmandeb to Suez and the Iſthmus.

Theſe winds are by ſome corruptly called *the trade-winds*; but this name given to them is a very erroneous one, and apt to confound narratives, and make them unintelligible. A trade-wind is a wind which, all the year through, blows, and has ever blown, from the ſame point of the horizon; ſuch

is

is the ſouth-weſt, ſouth of the Line, in the Indian and Pacific Ocean. On the contrary, theſe winds, of which we have now ſpoken, are called *monſoons;* each year they blow ſix months from the northward, and the other ſix months from the ſouthward, in the Arabian Gulf: While in the Indian Ocean, without the Straits of Babelmandeb, they blow juſt the contrary at the ſame ſeaſons; that is, in ſummer from the ſouthward, and in winter from the northward, ſubject to a ſmall inflexion to the eaſt and to the weſt.

The reader will obſerve, then, that, a veſſel ſailing from Suez or the Elanitic Gulf, in any of the ſummer months, will find a ſteady wind at north-weſt, which will carry it in the direction of the Gulf to Mocha. At Mocha, the coaſt is eaſt and weſt to the Straits of Babelmandeb, ſo that the veſſel from Mocha will have variable winds for a ſhort ſpace, but moſtly weſterly, and theſe will carry her on to the Straits. She is then done with the monſoon in the Gulf, which was from the north, and, being in the Indian Ocean, is taken up by the monſoon which blows in the ſummer months there, and is directly contrary to what obtains in the Gulf. This is a ſouth-weſter, which carries the veſſel with a flowing ſail to any part in India, without delay or impediment.

The ſame happens upon her return home. She ſails in the winter months by the monſoon proper to that ſea, that is, with a north-eaſt, which carries her through the Straits of Babelmandeb. She finds, within the Gulf, a wind at ſouth-eaſt, directly contrary to what was in the ocean; but then her courſe

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is contrary likewiſe, ſo that a ſouth-eaſter, anſwering to the direction of the Gulf, carries her directly to Suez, or the Elanitic Gulf, to whichever way ſhe propoſes going. Hitherto all is plain, ſimple, and eaſy to be underſtood; and this was the reaſon why, in the earlieſt ages, the India trade was carried on without difficulty.

Many doubts, however, have ariſen about a port called *Ophir*, whence the immenſe quantities of gold and ſilver came, which were neceſſary at this time, when proviſion was making for building the Temple of Jeruſalem. In what part of the world this Ophir was has not been yet agreed. Connected with this voyage, too, was one to Tarſhiſh, which ſuffers the ſame difficulties; one and the ſame fleet performed them both in the ſame ſeaſon.

In order to come to a certainty where this Ophir was, it will be neceſſary to examine what ſcripture ſays of it, and to keep preciſely to every thing like deſcription which we can find there, without indulging our fancy farther. *Firſt*, then, the trade to Ophir was carried on from the Elanitic Gulf through the Indian Ocean. *Secondly*, The returns were gold, ſilver, and ivory, but eſpecially ſilver *. *Thirdly*, The time of the going and coming of the fleet was preciſely three years †, at no period more nor leſs.

Now, if Solomon's fleet ſailed from the Elanitic Gulf to the Indian Ocean, this voyage of neceſſity muſt have been made by monſoons, for no other winds

* 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 22. † 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 22. 2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 21.

winds reign in that ocean. And, what certainly ſhews this was the caſe, is the preciſe term of three years, in which the fleet went and came between Ophir and Ezion-gaber. For it is plain, ſo as to ſuperſede the neceſſity of proof or argument, that, had this voyage been made with variable winds, no limited term of years ever could have been obſerved in its going and returning. The fleet might have returned from Ophir in two years, in three, four, or five years; but with variable winds, the return preciſely in three years was not poſſible, whatever part of the globe Ophir might be ſituated in.

Neither Spain or Peru could be Ophir; part of theſe voyages muſt have been made by variable winds, and the return conſequently uncertain. The iſland of Ceylon, in the Eaſt Indies, could not be Ophir; the voyage thither is indeed made by monſoons, but we have ſhewed that a year is all that can be ſpent in a voyage to the Eaſt Indies; beſides, Ceylon has neither gold nor ſilver, though it has ivory. St. Domingo has neither gold, nor ſilver, nor ivory. When the Tyrians diſcovered Spain, they found a profuſion of ſilver in huge maſſes, but this they brought to Tyre by the Mediterranean, and then ſent it to the Red Sea over land to anſwer the returns from India. Tarſhiſh, too, is not found to be a port in any of theſe voyages, ſo that part of the deſcription fails, nor were there ever elephants bred in Spain.

Theſe mines of Ophir were probably what furniſhed the Eaſt with gold in the earlieſt times; great traces of excavation muſt, therefore, have appeared; yet in none of the places juſt mentioned

ed are there great remains of any mines that have been wrought. The ancient traces of ſilver-mines in Spain are not to be found, and there never were any of gold. John Dos Santos*, a Dominican friar, ſays, that on the coaſt of Africa, in the kingdom of Sofala, the main-land oppoſite to Madagaſcar, there are mines of gold and ſilver, than which none can be more abundant, eſpecially in ſilver. They bear the traces of having been wrought from the earlieſt ages. They were actually open and working when the Portugueſe conquered that part of the peninſula, and were probably given up ſince the diſcovery of the new world, rather from political than any other reaſons.

John Dos Santos ſays, that he landed at Sofala in the year 1586; that he ſailed up the great river Cuama as far as Tetè, where, always deſirous to be in the neighbourhood of gold, his Order had placed their convent. Thence he penetrated for above two hundred leagues into the country, and ſaw the gold mines then working, at a mountain called Afura †. At a conſiderable diſtance from theſe are the ſilver mines of Chicoua; at both places there is great appearance of ancient excavations; and at both places the houſes of the kings are built with mud and ſtraw, whilſt there are large remains of maſſy buildings of ſtone and lime.

It is a tradition which generally obtains in that country, that theſe works belonged to the Queen of Saba, and were built at the time, and for the purpoſe of

* Vid. Voyage of Dos Santos, publiſhed by Le Grande.

† See the map of this voyage.

of the trade on the Red Sea: this tradition is common to all the Cafrs in that country. Eupolemus, an ancient author quoted by Euſebius *, ſpeaking of David, ſays, that he built ſhips at Eloth, a city in Arabia, and thence ſent miners, or, as he calls them, *metal-men*, to Orphi, or Ophir, an iſland in the Red Sea. Now, by the Red Sea, he underſtands the Indian Ocean †; and by Orphi, he probably meant the iſland of Madagaſcar; or Orphi (or Ophir) might have been the name of the Continent, inſtead of Sofala, that is, Sofala where the mines are might have been the main-land of Orphi.

The kings of the iſles are often mentioned in this voyage; Socotra, Madagaſcar, the Commorras, and many other ſmall iſlands thereabout, are probably thoſe the ſcripture calls the *Iſles*. All, then, at laſt reduces itſelf to the finding a place, either Sofala, or any other place adjoining to it, which avowedly can furniſh gold, ſilver, and ivory in quantity, as large tokens of ancient excavations, and is at the ſame time under ſuch reſtrictions from monſoons, that three years are abſolutely neceſſary to perform the voyage, that it needs no more, and cannot be done in leſs, and this is Ophir.

Let us now try theſe mines of Dos Santos by the laws of the monſoons, which we have already laid down in deſcribing the voyage to India. The fleet, or ſhip, for Sofala, parting in June from Ezion-gaber,

* Apud Euſeb. Præp. Evang. lib. 9.

† Dionyſii Periegeſis, ver. 38. and Coment. Euſtathii in eundem. Strabo, lib. 16. p. 765. Agathemeri Geographia, lib. 2. cap. 11.

gaber, would run down before the northern monſoon to Mocha. Here, not the monſoon, but the direction of the Gulf changes, and the violence of the ſouth-weſters, which then reign in the Indian Ocean, make themſelves at times felt even in Mocha Roads. The veſſel therefore comes to an anchor in the harbour of Mocha, and here ſhe waits for moderate weather and a fair wind, which carries her out of the Straits of Babelmandeb, through the few leagues where the wind is variable. If her courſe was now to the Eaſt Indies, that is eaſt-north-eaſt, or north-eaſt and by north, ſhe would find a ſtrong ſouth-weſt wind that would carry her to any part of India, as ſoon as ſhe cleared Cape Gardefan, to which ſhe was bound.

But matters are widely different if ſhe is bound for Sofala; her courſe is nearly ſouth-weſt, and ſhe meets at Cape Gardefan a ſtrong ſouth-weſter that blows directly in her teeth. Being obliged to return into the gulf, ſhe miſtakes this for a trade-wind, becauſe ſhe is not able to make her voyage to Mocha but by the ſummer monſoon, which carries her no farther than the Straits of Babelmandeb, and then leaves her in the face of a contrary wind, a ſtrong current to the northward, and violent ſwell.

The attempting this voyage with ſails, in theſe circumſtances, was abſolutely impoſſible, as their veſſels went only before the wind: if it was performed at all, it muſt have been by oars *, and great havock and loſs of men muſt have been the conſequence

* Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 6.

quence of the ſeveral trials. This is not conjecture only; the prophet Ezekiel deſcribes the very fact. Speaking of the Tyrian voyages, probably of this very one, he ſays, "Thy rowers have brought "thee into great waters (the ocean): the eaſt wind "hath broken thee in the midſt of the ſeas *." In ſhort, the eaſt, that is the north-eaſt wind, was the very monſoon that was to carry them to Sofala, yet having no ſails, being upon a lee-ſhore, a very bold coaſt, and great ſwell, it was abſolutely impoſſible with oars to ſave themſelves from deſtruction.

At laſt philoſophy and obſervation, together with the unwearied perſeverance of man bent upon his own views and intereſt, removed theſe difficulties, and ſhewed the mariners of the Arabian Gulf that theſe periodical winds, which, in the beginning, they looked upon as invincible barriers to the trading to Sofala, when once underſtood, were the very means of performing this voyage ſafely and expeditiouſly.

The veſſel trading to Sofala ſailed, as I have ſaid, from the bottom of the Arabian Gulf in ſummer, with the monſoon at north, which carried her to Mocha. There the monſoon failed her by the change of the direction of the Gulf. The ſouth-weſt winds which blow without Cape Gardefan in the Indian Ocean, forced themſelves round the Cape ſo as to be felt in the road of Mocha, and make it uneaſy riding there. But theſe ſoon changed, the weather became moderate, and the veſſel, I ſuppoſe in the month of Auguſt, was ſafe at anchor under Cape Gardefan,

* Ezek. chap. xxvii. ver. 26.

Gardefan, where was the port which, many years afterwards, was called Promontorium Aromatum. Here the ſhip was obliged to ſtay all November, becauſe all theſe ſummers months the wind ſouth of the Cape was a ſtrong ſouth-weſter, as hath been before ſaid, directly in the teeth of the voyage to Sofala. But this time was not loſt; part of the goods bought to be ready for the return was ivory, frankincenſe, and myrrh; and the ſhip was then at the principal mart for theſe.

I ſuppoſe in November the veſſel ſailed with the wind at north-eaſt, with which ſhe would ſoon have made her voyage: But off the coaſt of Melinda, in the beginning of December, ſhe there met an anomalous monſoon at ſouth-weſt, in our days firſt obſerved by Dr. Halley, which cut off her voyage to Sofala, and obliged her to put into the ſmall harbour of *Mocha*, near Melinda, but nearer ſtill to Tarſhiſh, which we find here by accident, and which we think a ſtrong corroboration that we are right as to the reſt of the voyage. In the annals of Abyſſinia, we ſee that Amda Sion, making war upon that coaſt in the 14th century, in a liſt of the rebellious Mooriſh vaſſals, mentions the Chief of Tarſhiſh as one of them, in the very ſituation where we have now placed him.

Solomon's veſſel then, was obliged to ſtay at Tarſhiſh till the month of April of the ſecond year. In May, the wind ſet in at north-eaſt, and probably carried her that ſame month to Sofala. All the time ſhe ſpent at Tarſhiſh was not loſt, for part of her cargo was to be brought from that place, and ſhe probably bought, beſpoke, or left it there.

From

From May of the ſecond year, to the end of that monſoon in October, the veſſel could not ſtir; the wind was north-eaſt. But this time, far from being loſt, was neceſſary to the traders for getting in their cargo, which we ſhall ſuppoſe was ready for them.

The ſhip ſails, on her return, in the month of November of the ſecond year, with the monſoon ſouth-weſt, which in a very few weeks would have carried her into the Arabian Gulf. But off Mocha, near Melinda and Tarſhiſh, ſhe met the north-eaſt monſoon, and was obliged to go into that port and ſtay there till the end of that monſoon; after which a ſouth-weſter came to her relief in May of the third year. With the May monſoon ſhe ran to Mocha within the Straits, and was there confined by the ſummer monſoon blowing up the Arabian Gulf from Suez, and meeting her. Here ſhe lay till that monſoon, which in ſummer blows northerly from Suez, changed to a ſouth-eaſt one in October or November, and that very eaſily brought her up into the Elanitic Gulf, the middle or end of December of the third year. She had no need of more time to complete her voyage, and it was not poſſible ſhe could do it in leſs. In ſhort, ſhe changed the monſoon ſix times, which is thirty-ſix months, or three years exactly; and there is not another combination of monſoons over the globe, as far as I know, capable to effect the ſame. The reader will pleaſe to conſult the map, and keep it before him, which will remove any difficulties he may have. It is for his inſtruction this map has been made,

made, not for that of the learned prelate * to whom it is inſcribed, much more capable of giving additional lights, than in need of receiving any information I can give, even on this ſubject.

The celebrated Monteſquieu conjectures, that Ophir was really on the coaſt of Africa; and the conjecture of that great man merits more attention than the aſſertions of ordinary people. He is too ſagacious, and too enlightened, either to doubt of the reality of the voyage itſelf, or to ſeek for Ophir and Tarſhiſh in China. Uninformed, however, of the particular direction of the monſoons upon the coaſt, firſt very ſlightly ſpoken of by Eudoxus, and lately obſerved and delineated by Dr. Halley, he was ſtaggered upon conſidering that the whole diſtance, which employed a veſſel in Solomon's time for three years, was a thouſand leagues, ſcarcely more than the work of a month. He, therefore, ſuppoſes, that the reaſon of delay was owing to the imperfection of the veſſels, and goes into very ingenious calculations, reaſonings, and concluſions thereupon. He conjectures, therefore, that the ſhips employed by Solomon were what he calls *junks* † of the Red Sea, made of papyrus, and covered with hides or leather.

Pliny had ſaid, that one of theſe junks of the Red Sea was twenty days on a voyage, which a Greek or Roman veſſel would have performed in ſeven; and Strabo § had ſaid the ſame thing before him.

This

* Dr. Douglas, Biſhop of Carliſle. † Vide L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxi. cap. 6. p. 476. ‡ Plin lib. vi. cap. 22. § Strabo, lib. xv.

This relative ſlowneſs, or ſwiftneſs, will not ſolve the difficulty. For, if theſe junks * were the veſſels employed to Ophir, the long voyage, much more they would have been employed on the ſhort one, to and from India; now they performed this within a year, which was all a Roman or Greek veſſel could do, therefore this was not the cauſe. Thoſe employed by Solomon were Tyrian and Idumean veſſels, the beſt ſhips and ſailers of their age. Whoever has ſeen the prodigious ſwell, the violent currents, and ſtrong ſouth-weſters beyond the Straits of Babelmandeb, will not need any argument to perſuade him, that no veſſel made of papyrus, or leather, could live an hour upon that ſea. The junks, indeed, were light and convenient boats, made to croſs the narrow gulf between the Sabeans and Homerites, or Cuſhites, at Azab upon the Red Sea, and carry proviſions from Arabia Felix to the more deſert coaſt of Azab. I have hinted, that the names of places ſufficiently demonſtrate the great loſs of men that happened to the traders to Sofala, before the knowledge of the monſoons, and the introduction of the uſe of ſails.

I ſhall now conſider how far the thing is confirmed by the names of places in the language of the country, ſuch as they have retained among them to the preſent day.

There are three Mochas mentioned in this voyage, ſituated in countries very diſſimilar to, and diſtant from, each other. The firſt is in Arabia Deſerta, in lat. 30° nearly, not far from the bottom of the Gulf

* I know there are contrary opinions, and the junks might have been various. Vide Salm.

Gulf of Suez. The ſecond is in lat. 13°, a ſmall diſtance from the Straits of Babelmandeb. The third Mocha is in lat. 3° ſouth, near Tarſhiſh, on the coaſt of Melinda. Now, the meaning of Mocha, in the Ethiopic, is *priſon*; and is particularly given to theſe three places, becauſe, in any of them, a ſhip is forced to ſtay or be detained for months, till the changing of the monſoon ſets her at liberty to purſue her voyage. At Mocha, near the bottom of the Gulf of Suez, a veſſel, wanting to proceed ſouthward to Babelmandeb, is kept here in priſon all winter, till the ſummer monſoon ſets her at liberty. At Mocha, in Arabia Felix, the ſame happens to any veſſel wanting to proceed to Suez in the ſummer months; ſhe may come up from the Straits of Babelmandeb to Mocha Road by the accidental direction of the head of the Gulf; but, in the month of May, the north-weſt wind obliges her to put into Mocha, and there to ſtay till the ſouth-eaſter relieves her in November. After you double Gardefan, the ſummer monſoon, at north-eaſt, is carrying your veſſel full ſail to Sofala, when the anomalous monſoon takes her off the coaſt of Melinda, and forces her into Tarſhiſh, where ſhe is impriſoned for ſix months in the Mocha there. So that this word is very emphatically applied to thoſe places where ſhips are neceſſarily detained by the change of monſoons, and proves the truth of what I have ſaid.

The laſt Cape on the Abyſſinian ſhore, before you run into the Straits, is Cape Defan, called by the Portugueſe, *Cape Daſui.* This has no meaning in any language; the Abyſſinians, on whoſe ſide it is, call

call it *Cape Defan*, the Cape of Burial. It was probably there where the eaſt wind drove aſhore the bodies of ſuch as had been ſhipwrecked in the voyage. The point of the ſame coaſt, which ſtretches out into the Gulf, before you arrive at Babelmandeb, was, by the Romans, called *Promontorium Aromatum*, and ſince, by the Portugueſe, *Cape Gardefui*. But the name given it by the Abyſſinians and ſailors on the Gulf is, *Cape Gardefan*, the Straits of Burial.

Still nearer the Straits is a ſmall port in the kingdom of Adel, called *Mete*, *i. e.* Death, or, he or they are dead. And more to the weſtward, in the ſame kingdom, is Mount Felix, corruptly ſo called by the Portugueſe. The Latins call it Elephas Mons, the Mountain of the Elephant; and the natives, Jibbel Feel, which has the ſame ſignification. The Portugueſe, who did not know that Jibbel Feel was Elephas Mons, being miſled by the ſound, have called it *Jibbel Felix*, the Happy Mountain, a name to which it has no ſort of title.

The Straits by which we enter the Arabian Gulf are by the Portugueſe called Babelmandel, which is nonſenſe. The name by which it goes among the natives is Babelmandeb, the Gate or Port of Affliction. And near it Ptolemy * places a town he calls, in the Greek, Mandaeth, which appears to me to be only a corruption of Mandeb. The Promontory that makes the ſouth ſide of the Straits, and the city thereupon, is *Diræ*, which means the Hades, or Hell, by Ptolemy † called Δειρη. This, too, is



* Ptol. Geog. lib. 4. cap 7. † Id. ibid.

a tranſlation of the ancient name, becauſe Διραι (or Diræ) has no ſignification in the Greek. A cluſter of iſlands you meet in the canal, after paſſing Mocha is called Jibbel Zekir, or, the Iſlands of Prayer for the remembrance of the dead. And ſtill, in the ſame courſe up the Gulf, others are called Sebaat Gzier, Praiſe or Glory be to God, as we may ſuppoſe, for the return from this dangerous navigation.

All the coaſt to the eaſtward, to where Gardefan ſtretches out into the ocean, is the territory of Saba which immemorially has been the mart of frankincenſe, myrrh, and balſam. Behind Saba, upon the Indian Ocean, is the *Regio Cinnamonifera*, where a conſiderable quantity of that wild cinnamon grows, which the Italian druggiſts call *canella*.

Inland near to Azab, as I have before obſerved, are large ruins, ſome of them of ſmall ſtones and lime adhering ſtrongly together. There is eſpecially an aqueduct, which brought formerly a large quantity of water from a fountain in the mountains, which muſt have greatly contributed to the beauty, health, and pleaſure of Saba. This is built with large maſſy blocks of marble, brought from the neighbouring mountains, placed upon one another without lime or cement, but joined with thick cramps, or bars of braſs. There are likewiſe a number of wells, not ſix feet wide, compoſed of pieces of marble hewn to parts of a circle, and joined with the ſame bars of braſs alſo. This is exceedingly ſurpriſing, for Agatharcides * tells us, that the Alileans and Caſſandrins, in the ſouthern parts

* Agath. p. 60.

parts of Arabia (juſt oppoſite to Azab) had among them gold in ſuch plenty, that they would give double the weight of gold for iron, triple its weight for braſs, and ten times its weight for ſilver; that, in digging the earth, they found pieces of gold as big as olive-ſtones, but others much larger.

This ſeems to me extraordinary, if braſs was at ſuch a price in Arabia, that it could be here employed in the meaneſt and moſt common uſes. However this be, the inhabitants of the Continent, and of the peninſula of Arabia oppoſite to it, of all denominations agree, that this was the royal ſeat of the Queen of Saba, famous in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory for her journey to Jeruſalem; that theſe works belonged to her, and were erected at the place of her reſidence; that all the gold, ſilver, and perfumes came from her kingdom of Sofala, which was Ophir, and which reached from thence to Azab, upon the borders of the Red Sea, along the coaſt of the Indian Ocean.

It will very poſſibly be thought, that this is the place in which I ſhould mention the journey that the Queen of Saba made into Paleſtine; but as the dignity of the expedition itſelf, and the place it holds in Jewiſh antiquities, merits that it ſhould be treated in a place by itſelf, ſo the connection that it is ſuppoſed to have with the foundation of the monarchy of Abyſſinia, the country whoſe hiſtory I am going to write, makes this particularly proper for the ſake of connection; and I ſhall, therefore continue the hiſtory of the trade of the Arabian Gulf to a period in which I can reſume the narrative of this expedition without occaſioning any interruption to either.

## CHAP. V.

*Fluctuating State of the India Trade—Hurt by Military Expeditions of the Perſians—Revives under the Ptolemies—Falls to Decay under the Romans.*

THE proſperous days of the commerce with the Elanitic Gulf ſeemed to be at this time nearly paſt; yet after the revolt of the ten tribes, Edom remaining to the houſe of David, they ſtill carried on a ſort of trade from the Elanitic Gulf, though attended with many difficulties. This continued till the reign of Jehoſaphat *; but, on Jehoram's ſucceeding that prince, the Edomites † revolted and choſe a king of their own, and were never after ſubject to the kings of Judah till the reign of Uzziah ‡, who conquered Eloth, fortified it, and having peopled it with a colony of his own, revived the old traffic. This ſubſiſted till the reign of Ahaz, when Rezin king of Damaſcus took Eloth ‖, and expelled the Jews, planting in their ſtead a colony of Syrians. But he did not long enjoy this good fortune, for the year after, Rezin § was conquered by Tilgath-pileſer; and one of the fruits of this

* 1 Kings, chap. xxii. ver. 48. 2 Chron. chap. xx. ver. 36.
† 2 Kings, chap. viii. ver. 22. 2 Chron. chap. xxi. ver 10.
‡ 2 Kings, chap. xiv. ver. 22. 2 Chron. chap. 26. ver. ii.
‖ 2 Kings, chap. xvi. ver. 6. § 2 Kings, chap. xvi. ver. 6.

this victory was the taking of Eloth, which never after returned to the Jews, or was of any profit to Jeruſalem.

The repeated wars and conqueſt to which the cities on the Elanitic Gulf had been ſubject, the extirpation of the Edomites, all the great events that immediately followed one another, of courſe diſturbed the uſual channel of trade by the Red Sea, whoſe ports were now conſequently become unſafe by being in poſſeſſion of ſtrangers, robbers, and ſoldiers; it changed, therefore, to a place nearer the centre of police and good government, than fortified and frontier towns could be ſuppoſed to be. The Indian and African merchants, by convention, met in Aſſyria, as they had done in Semiramis's time; the one by the Perſian Gulf and Euphrates, the other through Arabia. Aſſyria, therefore, became the mart of the India trade in the Eaſt.

The conqueſts of Nabopollaſer, and his ſon Nebuchadnezzar, had brought a prodigious quantity of bullion, both ſilver and gold, to Babylon his capital. For he had plundered Tyre *, and robbed Solomon's Temple † of all the gold that had been brought from Ophir; and he had, beſides, conquered Egypt and laid it waſte, and cut off the communication of trade in all theſe places, by almoſt extirpating the people. Immenſe riches flowed to him, therefore, on all ſides, and it was a circumſtance particularly favourable to merchants

* Ezek. chap. xxvi. ver. 7. † 2 Kings, chap. xxiv. ver. 13. and 2 Chron. chap. xxxvi. ver. 7.

merchants in that country, that it was governed by written laws that ſcreened their properties from any remarkable violence or injuſtice.

I ſuppoſe the phraſe in ſcripture, "The law of the Medes and Perſians, which altereth not *," muſt mean only written laws, by which thoſe countries were governed, without being left to the diſcretion of the judge, as all the Eaſt was, and as it actually now is.

In this ſituation the country was at the birth of Cyrus, who, having taken Babylon † and ſlain Belſhazzer ‡, became maſter of the whole trade and riches of the Eaſt. Whatever character writers give of this great Prince, his conduct, with regard to the commerce of the country, ſhews him to have been a weak one: For, not content with the prodigious proſperity to which his dominions had arrived, by the misfortune of other nations, and perhaps by the good faith kept by his ſubjects to merchants, enforced by thoſe written laws, he undertook the moſt abſurd and diſaſtrous project of moleſting the traders themſelves, and invading India, that all at once he might render himſelf maſter of their riches. He executed this ſcheme juſt as abſurdly as he formed it; for, knowing that large caravans of merchants came into Perſia and Aſſyria from India, through the Ariana (the deſert coaſt that runs all along the Indian Ocean to the Perſian Gulf, almoſt entirely deſtitute of water, and very nearly

* Dan. chap. vi. ver. 8. and Eſther, chap. i. ver. 19.

† Ezra, chap. v. ver. 14. and chap. vi. ver. 5.

‡ Dan. chap. v. ver. 30.

nearly as much ſo of proviſions, both which caravans always carry with them) he attempted to enter India by the very ſame road with a large army, the very ſame way his predeceſſor Semiramis had projected 1300 years before; and as her army had periſhed, ſo did his to a man, without having ever had it in his power to take one pepper-corn by force from any part of India.

The ſame fortune attended his ſon and ſucceſſor Cambyſes, who, obſerving the quantity of gold brought from Ethiopia into Egypt, reſolved to march to the ſource, and at once to make himſelf maſter of thoſe treaſures by rapine, which he thought came too ſlowly through the medium of commerce.

Cambyſes's expedition into Africa is too well known for me to dwell upon it in this place. It hath obtained a celebrity by the abſurdity of the project, by the enormous cruelty and havock that attended the courſe of it, and by the great and very juſt puniſhment that cloſed it in the end. It was one of thoſe many monſtrous extravagancies which made up the life of the greateſt madman that ever diſgraced the annals of antiquity. The baſeſt mind is perhaps the moſt capable of avarice; and when this paſſion has taken poſſeſſion of the human heart, it is ſtrong enough to excite us to undertakings as great as any of thoſe dictated by the nobleſt of our virtues.

Cambyſes, amidſt the commiſſion of the moſt horrid exceſſes during the conqueſt of Egypt, was informed that, from the ſouth of that country, there was conſtantly brought a quantity of pure gold, independent of what came from the top of the

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Arabic Gulf, which was now carried into Aſſyria, and circulated in the trade of his country. This ſupply of gold belonged properly and excluſively to Egypt; and a very lucrative, though not very extenſive commerce, was, by its means, carried on with India. He found out that the people, poſſeſſing theſe treaſures, were called *Macrobii*, which ſignifies *long livers*; and that they poſſeſſed a country divided from him by lakes, mountains, and deſerts. But what ſtill affected him moſt was, that in his way were a multitude of warlike Shepherds, with whom the reader is already ſufficiently acquainted.

Cambyſes, to flatter, and make peace with them, fell furiouſly upon all the gods and temples in Egypt; he murdered the ſacred ox, the apis, deſtroyed Memphis, and all the public buildings wherever he went. This was a gratification to the Shepherds, being equally enemies to thoſe that worſhipped beaſts, or lived in cities. After this introduction, he concluded peace with them in the moſt ſolemn manner, each nation vowing eternal amity with the other. Notwithſtanding which, no ſooner was he arrived at Thebes (in Egypt) than he detached a large army to plunder the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, the greateſt object of the worſhip of theſe *ſhepherds*; which army utterly periſhed without a man remaining, covered, as I ſuppoſe, by the moving ſands. He then began his march againſt the *Macrobii*, keeping cloſe to the Nile. The country there being too high to receive any benefit from the inundation of the river, produced no corn, ſo that part of his army died for want of proviſion.

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Another detachment of his army proceeded to the country of the Shepherds, who, indeed, furniſhed him with food; but, exaſperated at the ſacrilege he had committed againſt their god, they conducted his troops through places were they could procure no water. After ſuffering all this loſs, he was not yet arrived beyond 24°, the parallel of Syené. From hence he diſpatched ambaſſadors, or ſpies, to diſcover the country before him, finding he could no longer rely upon the Shepherds. Theſe found it full of black war-like people, of great ſize, and prodigious ſtrength of body; active, and continually exerciſed in hunting the lion, the elephant, and other monſtrous beaſts which live in theſe foreſts.

The inhabitants ſo abounded with gold, that the moſt common utenſils and inſtruments were made of that metal, whilſt, at the ſame time, they were utter ſtrangers to bread of any kind whatever; and, not only ſo, but their country was, by its nature, incapable of producing any ſort of grain from which bread could be made. They ſubſiſted upon raw fleſh alone, dried in the ſun, eſpecially that of the rhinoceros, the elephant, and giraffa, which they had ſlain in hunting. On ſuch food they have ever ſince lived, and live to this day, and on ſuch food I myſelf have lived with them; yet ſtill it appears ſtrange, that people confined to this diet, without variety or change, ſhould have it for their characteriſtic that they were long livers.

They were not at all alarmed at the arrival of Cambyſes's ambaſſadors. On the contrary, they treated them as an inferior ſpecies of men. Upon

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aſking them about their diet, and hearing it was upon bread, they called it *dung*, I ſuppoſe as having the appearance of that bread which I have ſeen the miſerable Agows, their neighbours, make from ſeeds of baſtard rye, which they collect in their fields under the burning rays of the ſun. They laughed at Cambyſes's requiſition of ſubmitting to him, and did not conceal their contempt of his idea of bringing an army thither.

They treated ironically his hopes of conqueſt, even ſuppoſing all difficulties of the deſert overcome, and his army ready to enter their country, and counſelled him to return while he was well, at leaſt for a time, till he ſhould produce a man of his army that could bend the bow that they then ſent him; in which caſe, he might continue to advance, and have hope of conqueſt. The reaſon of their reference to the bow will be ſeen afterwards. I mention theſe circumſtances of the quantity of gold, the hunting of elephants, their living upon the raw fleſh, and, above all, the circumſtances of the bow, as things which I myſelf can teſtify to have met with among this very people. It is, indeed, highly ſatisfactory in travelling, to be able to explain truths which, from a want of knowledge of the country alone, have been treated as falſehoods, and placed to the diſcredit of hiſtorians.

The Perſians were all famous archers. The mortification, therefore, they experienced, by receiving the bow they could not bend, was a very ſenſible one, though the narrative of the quantity of gold the meſſengers had ſeen made a much greater impreſſion upon Cambyſes. To procure this treaſure

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was, however, impracticable, as he had no provision, nor was there any in the way of his march. His army, therefore, wasted daily by death and dispersion; and he had the mortification to be obliged to retreat into Egypt, after part of his troops had been reduced to the necessity of eating each other *.

Darius, king of Persia, attempted to open this trade in a much more worthy and liberal manner, as he sent ships down the river Indus into the ocean, whence they entered the Red Sea. It is probable, in this voyage, he acquired all the knowledge necessary for establishing this trade in Persia; for he must have passed through the Persian Gulf, and along the whole eastern coast of Arabia; he must have seen the marts of perfumes and spices that were at the mouth of the Red Sea, and the manner of bartering for gold and silver, as he was necessarily in those trading places which were upon the very same coast from which the bullion was brought. I do not know, then, why M. de Montesquieu † has treated this expedition of Darius so contemptuously, as it appears to have been executed without great trouble or expence, and terminated without loss or hardship; the strongest proof that it was at first wisely planned. The prince himself was famous for his love of learning, which we find by his anxiety to be admitted among the Magi, and the sense he had of that honour, in causing it to be engraved upon his tomb.

The expedition of Alexander into India was, of all events, that which most threatened the destruction

* Lucan, lib. x. ver. 280. † Vide Montesq. liv. xxi. chap. 8.

tion of the commerce of the Continent, or the diſperſing it into different channels throughout the Eaſt: Firſt, by the deſtruction of Tyre, which muſt have, for a time, annihilated the trade by the Arabian Gulf; then by his march through Egypt into the country of the Shepherds, and his intended further progreſs into Ethiopia to the head of the Nile. If we may judge of what we hear of him in that part of his expedition, we ſhould be apt not to believe, as others are fond of doing, that he had ſchemes of commerce mingled with thoſe of conqueſts. His anxiety about his own birth at the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, this firſt queſtion that he aſked of the prieſt, "Where the Nile had its ſource," ſeemed to denote a mind buſied about other objects; for elſe he was then in the very place for information, being in the temple of that horned god *, the deity of the Shepherds, the African carriers of the Indian produce; a temple which, though in the midſt of ſand, and deſtitute of gold or ſilver, poſſeſſed more and better information concerning the trade of India and Africa, than could be found in any other place on the Continent. Yet we do not hear of one queſtion being made, or one arrangement taken, relative to opening the India trade with Thebes, or with Alexandria, which he built afterwards.

After having viewed the main ocean to the ſouth, he ordered Nearchus with his fleet to coaſt along the Perſian Gulf, accompanied by part of the army on land for their mutual aſſiſtance, as there were a great

* Lucan, lib. 9 ver. 515.

great many hardſhips which followed the march of the army by land, and much difficulty and danger attended the ſhipping as they were ſailing in unknown ſeas againſt the monſoons. Nearchus himſelf informed the king at Babylon of his ſucceſsful voyage, who gave him orders to continue it into the Red Sea, which he happily accompliſhed to the bottom of the Arabian Gulf.

We are told it was his intention to carry on the India trade by the Gulf of Perſia, for which reaſon he broke down all the cataracts and dams which the Perſians had built over the rivers communicating with the Euphrates. No uſe, however, ſeems to have been made of his knowledge of Arabia and Ethiopia, which makes me imagine this expedition of Alexander's fleet was not an idea of his own. It is, indeed, ſaid, that when Alexander came into India, the ſouthern or Indian Ocean was perfectly unknown; but I am rather inclined to believe from this circumſtance, that this voyage was made from ſome memorials remaining concerning the voyage of Darius. The fact and circumſtances of Darius's voyage are come down to us, and, by theſe very ſame means, it muſt be probable they reached Alexander, who I do not believe ever intended to carry on the India trade at Babylon.

To render it impoſſible, indeed, he could not have done three things more effectual than he did, when he deſtroyed Tyre, and diſperſed its inhabitants, perſecuted the Orites, or land-carriers, in the Ariana, and built Alexandria upon the Mediterranean; which laſt ſtep fixed the Indian trade in

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that city, and would have kept it there eternally, had the Cape of Good Hope never been diſcovered.

The Ptolemies, the wiſeſt princes that ever ſat upon the throne of Egypt, applied with the utmoſt care and attention to cultivate the trade of India, to keep up perfect and friendly underſtanding with every country that ſupplied any branch of it, and, inſtead of diſturbing it either in Aſia, Arabia, or Ethiopia, as their predeceſſors had done, they uſed their utmoſt efforts to encourage it in all quarters.

Ptolemy I. was then reigning in Alexandria, the foundation of whoſe greatneſs he not only laid, but lived to ſee it arrive at the greateſt perfection. It was his conſtant ſaying, that the true glory of a king was not in being rich himſelf, but making his ſubjects ſo. He, therefore, opened his ports to all trading nations, encouraged ſtrangers of every language, protected caravans, and a free navigation by ſea, by which, in a few years, he made Alexandria the great ſtore-houſe of merchandize, from India, Arabia, and Ethiopia. He did ſtill further to inſure the duration of his kingdom, at the ſame time that he ſhewed the utmoſt diſintereſtedneſs for the future happineſs of his people. He educated his ſon, Ptolemy Philadelphus, with the utmoſt care, and the happy genius of that prince had anſwered his father's utmoſt expectations; and, when he arrived at the age of governing, the father, worn out by the fatigue of long wars, ſurrendered the kingdom to his ſon.

Ptolemy had been a ſoldier from his infancy, and conſequently kept up a proper military force, that made him every where reſpected in theſe warlike

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and unſettled times. He had a fleet of two hundred ſhips of war conſtantly ready in the port of Alexandria, the only part for which he had apprehenſions. All behind him was wiſely governed, whilſt it enjoyed a moſt flouriſhing trade, to the proſperity of which peace is neceſſary. He died in peace and old age, after having merited the glorious name of *Soter*, or *Saviour of the kingdom*, which he himſelf had founded, the greateſt part of which differed from him in language, colour, habit, and religion.

It is with aſtoniſhment we ſee how thoroughly he had eſtabliſhed the trade of India, Ethiopia, and Arabia, and what progreſs he had already made towards uniting it with that of Europe, by a paſſage in Athenæus *, who mentions a feſtival and entertainment given by his ſon, Ptolemy Philadelphus, to the people of Alexandria at his acceſſion, while his father was alive, but had juſt given up his crown.

There was in this proceſſion a great number of Indian women, beſides of other countries; and by Indians we may underſtand, not only the Aſiatic Indians, but the Abyſſinians, and the inhabitants of the higher part of Africa, as all theſe countries were comprehended under the common appellation of *India*. Theſe were in the habit of ſlaves, and each led, or was followed by, a camel loaded with incenſe of Sheher, and cinnamon, beſides other aromatics. After theſe came a number of Ethiopian blacks carrying the teeth of 600 elephants.

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* Athen. lib. 5.

Another troop had a prodigious quantity of ebony; and again others loaded with that fineſt gold, which is not dug from the mine, but waſhed from the mountains by the trophical rains in ſmall pieces, or pellets, which the natives and traders at this day call *Tibbar*. Next came a pack of 24,000 Indian dogs, all Aſiatics, from the peninſula of India, followed by a prodigious number of foreign animals, both beaſts and birds, paroquets, and other birds of Ethiopia, carried in cages; 130 Ethiopian ſheep, 300 Arabian, and 20 from the Iſle of Nubia*; 26 Indian buffaloes, white as ſnow, and eight from Ethiopia; three brown bears, and a white one, which laſt muſt have been from the north of Europe; 14 leopards, 16 panthers, four lynxes, one giraffa, and a rhinoceros of Ethiopia.

When we reflect upon this prodigious mixture of animals, all ſo eaſily procured at one time, without preparation, we may imagine, that the quantity of merchandiſes, for common demand, which accompanied them, muſt have been in the proper proportion.

The current of trade ran towards Alexandria with the greateſt impetuoſity, all the articles of luxury of the Eaſt were to be found there. Gold and ſilver, which were ſent formerly to Tyre, came now down to the Iſthmus (for Tyre was no more) by a much ſhorter carriage, thence to Memphis, whence it was ſent down the Nile to Alexandria. The gold from the weſt and ſouth parts of the Continent

* This is probably from Atbara, or the old name of the iſland of Meroë, which had received the laſt name only as late as Cambyſes.

nent reached the ſame port with much leſs time and riſk; as there was now no Red Sea to paſs; and here was found the merchandiſe of Arabia and India in the greateſt profuſion.

To facilitate the communication with Arabia, Ptolemy built a town on the coaſt of the Red Sea, in the country of the Shepherds, and called it *Berenice* *, after his mother. This was intended as a place of neceſſary refreſhment for all the traders up and down the Gulf, whether of India or Ethiopia; hence the cargoes of merchants, who were afraid of loſing the monſoons, or had loſt them, were carried by the inhabitants of the country, in three days, to the Nile, and there embarked for Alexandria. To make the communication between the Nile and the Red Sea ſtill more commodious, this prince tried an attempt (which had twice before miſcarried with very great loſs) to bring a canal † from the Red Sea to the Nile, which he actually accompliſhed, joining it to the Peluſiac, or Eaſtern branch of the Nile. Locks and ſluices moreover are mentioned as having been employed even in thoſe early days by Ptolemy, but very trifling ones could be needed, for the difference of level is there but very ſmall.

This noble canal, one hundred yards broad, was not of that uſe to trade which was expected; merchants were weary of the length of time conſumed in going to the very bottom of the Gulf, and afterwards with this inland navigation of the canal, and that of the Nile, to Alexandria. It was therefore much more expeditious to unload at Berenice, and,



* Plin. lib. 6. cap. 20. † Strabo, lib. 17. p. 932.

after three days journey, ſend their merchandiſe directly down to Alexandria. Thus the canal was diſuſed, the goods paſſed from Berenice to the Nile by land, and that road continues open for the ſame purpoſe to this day.

It ſhould appear, that Ptolemy had employed the veſſels of India and the Red Sea, to carry on his commerce with the peninſula, and that the manner of trading directly to India with his own ſhips, was either not known or forgotten. He therefore ſent two ambaſſadors, or meſſengers, Megaſthenes and Denis, to obſerve and report what was the ſtate of India ſince the death of Alexander. Theſe two performed their voyage ſafely and ſpeedily. The account they gave of India, if it was ſtrictly a true one, was, in all reſpects, perfectly calculated to animate people to the further proſecution of that trade. In the mean time, in order to procure more convenience for veſſels trading on the Red Sea, he reſolved to attempt the penetrating into that part of Ethiopia which lies on that ſea, and, as hiſtorians imagine with an intention to plunder the inhabitants of their riches.

It muſt not, however, be ſuppoſed, that Ptolemy was not enough acquainted with the productions of a country ſo near to Egypt, as to know this part of it had neither gold nor ſilver, whilſt it was full of foreſts likewiſe; for it was that part of Ethiopia called Barbaria, at this day Barabra, inhabited by ſhepherds wandering with their cattle about the neighbouring mountains according as the rains fall. Another more probable conjecture was, that he wanted, by bringing about a change of manners in

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theſe people, to make them uſeful to him in a matter that was of the higheſt importance.

Ptolemy, like his father, had a very powerful fleet and army, but he was inferior to many of the princes, his rivals, in elephants, of which great uſe was then made in war. Theſe Ethiopians were hunters, and killed them for their ſubſiſtence. Ptolemy, however, wiſhed to have them taken alive, being numerous, and hoped both to furniſh himſelf, and diſpoſe of them as an article of trade, to his neighbours.

There is ſomething indeed ridiculous in the manner in which he executed this expedition. Aware of the difficulty of ſubſiſting in that country, he choſe only a hundred Greek horſemen, whom he covered with coats of monſtrous appearance and ſize, which left nothing viſible but the eyes of the rider. Their horſes too were diſguiſed by huge trappings, which took from them all proportion and ſhape. In this manner they entered this part of Ethiopia, ſpreading terror every where by their appearance, to which their ſtrength and courage bore a ſtrict proportion whenever they came to action. But neither force nor intreaty could gain any thing upon theſe Shepherds, or ever make them change or forſake the food they had been ſo long accuſtomed to; and all the fruit Ptolemy reaped from this expedition, was to build a city, by the ſea-ſide, in the ſouth-eaſt corner of this country, which he called Ptolemais Theron, or Ptolemais in the country of wild beaſts.

I have already obſerved, but ſhall again repeat it, that the reaſon why ſhips, in going up and down

the Red Sea, kept always upon the Ethiopian ſhore, and why the greateſt number of cities were always built upon that ſide is, that water is much more abundant on the Ethiopian ſide than the Arabian, and it was therefore of the greateſt conſequence to trade to have that coaſt fully diſcovered and civilized. Indeed it is more than probable, that nothing further was intended by the expedition of the hundred Greeks juſt now mentioned, than to gain ſufficient intelligence how this might be done moſt perfectly.

Ptolemy Evergetes, ſon and ſucceſſor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, availed himſelf of this diſcovery. Having provided himſelf amply with neceſſaries for his army, and ordered a fleet to coaſt along beſide him, up the Red Sea, he penetrated quite through the country of the Shepherds into that of the Ethiopian Troglodytes, who are black and woolly-headed, and inhabit the low country quite to the mountains of Abyſſinia. Nay *, he even aſcended thoſe mountains, forced the inhabitants to ſubmiſſion, built a large temple at Axum, the capital of Siré, and raiſed a great many obeliſks, ſeveral of which are ſtanding to this day. Afterwards proceeding to the ſouth-eaſt, he deſcended into the cinnamon and myrrh country, behind Cape Gardefan (the Cape that terminates the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean), from this, croſſed over to Arabia, to the Homerites, being the ſame people with the Abyſſinians, only on the Arabian ſhore. He then conquered ſeveral of the Arabian princes, who firſt

* Mon. Aduli.

firſt reſiſted him, and had it in his power to have put an end to the trade of India there, had he not been as great a politician as he was a warrior. He uſed his victory, therefore, in no other manner, than to exhort and oblige theſe princes to protect trade, encourage ſtrangers, and, by every means, provide for the ſurety of neutral intercourſe, by making rigorous examples of robbers by ſea and land.

The reigns of the latter Ptolemies were calculated to bring this commerce to a decline, had it not been for two great events, the fall of Carthage, deſtroyed by Scipio, and that of Corinth, by the conſul Mummius. The importance of theſe events to Alexandria ſeems to have ſuſtained the proſperity of Egypt, even againſt the ravages committed in the war between Ptolemy the VI. and VII. Alexandria was then beſieged, and not only deprived of its riches, but reduced to the utmoſt want of neceſſaries, and the horrid behaviour of Ptolemy VII. (had it continued) would have ſoon rendered that city deſolate. The conſequence of ſuch a conduct, however, made a ſtrong impreſſion on the prince himſelf, who, at once recalling his unjuſt edicts, by which he had baniſhed all foreign merchants from Alexandria, became on a ſudden wholly addicted to commerce, the encourager of arts and ſciences, and the protector of ſtrangers.

The impolitic conduct in the beginning of his reign, however, had affected trade even in India. For the ſtory preſerved by Poſidonius, and very improperly criticiſed by Strabo ſeems to import little leſs. One day, the troops poſted on the Arabian

Arabian Gulf found a ſhip abandoned to the waves, on board of which was one Indian only, half dead with hunger and thirſt, whom they brought to the king. This Indian declared he ſailed from his own country, and, having loſt his courſe and ſpent all his proviſions, he was carried to the place where he was found, without knowing where he was, and after having ſurvived the reſt of his companions: he concluded an imperfect narrative, by offering to be a guide to any perſon his majeſty would ſend to India. His propoſals were accordingly accepted, and Eudoxus was named by the king to accompany him. Strabo * indeed laughs at this ſtory. However, we muſt ſay, he has not ſeized the moſt ridiculous parts of it.

We are told that the king ordered the Indian to be taught Greek, and waited with patience till he had learned that language. Surely, before any perſon could thus inſtruct him, the maſter muſt have had ſome language in common with his ſcholar, or he had better have taught Eudoxus the Indian language, as it would have been as eaſy, and of much more uſe in the voyage he was to undertake. Beſides, is it poſſible to believe after the many years the Egyptians traded backwards and forwards to India, that there was not a man in Alexandria who could interpret for him to the king, when ſuch a number of Egyptians went every year to India to trade, and ſtayed there for months each time? Could Ptolemy Philadelphus, at his father's feſtival, find 600 Indian female ſlaves, all at once, in Alexandria;

* Strabo, lib. ii. p. 98.

dria; and, after the trade had laſted ſo much longer, were the people from India decreaſed, or would their language be leſs underſtood? The king's wiſdom, moreover, did not ſhew itſelf greatly, when he was going to truſt a ſhip with his ſubjects to ſo ſkilful a pilot as this Indian, who, in the firſt voyage, had loſt himſelf and all his companions.

India, however, and the Indian ſeas, were as well known in Egypt as they are now; and the magnificence and ſhew which attended Eudoxus's embaſſy ſeems to prove, that whatever truth there is in the Indian being found, Eudoxus' errand muſt have been to remove the bad effects that the king's extortions and robberies, committed upon all ſtrangers in the beginning of his reign, had made upon the trading nations. Eudoxus returned, but after the death of Ptolemy. The neceſſity, however, of this voyage appeared ſtill great enough to make Cleopatra his widow project a ſecond to the ſame place, and greater preparations were made than for the former one.

But Eudoxus, trying experiments probably about the courſes of the trade-winds, loſt his paſſage, and was thrown upon the coaſt of Ethiopia; where having landed, and made himſelf agreeable to the natives, he brought home to Egypt a particular deſcription of that country and its produce, which furniſhed all the diſcovery neceſſary to inſtruct the Ptolemies in every thing that related to the ancient trade of Arabia. In the courſe of the voyage, Euxodus diſcovered the part of the prow of a veſſel which had been broken off by a ſtorm. The figure of a horſe made it an object of inquiry; and

and ſome of the ſailors on board, who had been employed in European voyages, immediately knew this wreck to be part of one of thoſe veſſels uſed to trade on the weſtern ocean. Eudoxus * inſtantly perceived all the importance of the diſcovery, which amounted to nothing leſs, than that there was a paſſage round Africa from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean. Full of this thought, he returned to Egypt, and, having ſhewn the prow of his veſſel to European ſhip-maſters, they all declared that this had been part of a veſſel which had belonged to Cadiz, in Spain.

This diſcovery, great as it was, was to none of more importance than to Eudoxus; for, ſome time after, falling under the diſpleaſure of Ptolemy Lathyrus, VIIIth of that name, and being in danger of his life, he fled and embarked on the Red Sea, ſailed round the peninſula of Africa, croſſed the Atlantic Ocean, and came ſafely to Cadiz.

The ſpirit of inquiry, and deſire of travelling, ſpread itſelf inſtantly through Egypt, upon this voyage of Eudoxus; and different travellers puſhed their diſcoveries into the heart of the country, where ſome of the nations are reported to have been ſo ignorant as not to know the uſe of fire: ignorance almoſt incredible, had we not an inſtance of it in our own times. It was in the reign of Ptolemy IX. that Agatharcides † drew up his deſcription of the Red Sea.

The reigns of the other Ptolemies ending in the XIIIth of that name, though full of great events, have

* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. 2. cap. 67. † Dodwell's Diſſertat. vol. 1. Scrip. Grac. Min. ed. Ox. 1698. 8vo.

have nothing material to our preſent ſubject. Their conſtant expence and profuſion muſt have occaſioned a great conſumption of trading articles, and very little elſe was wanting; or, if there had, it muſt have arrived at its height in the reign of the celebrated Cleopatra; whoſe magnificence, beauty, and great talents, made her a wonder, greater than any in her capital. In her time, all nations flocked, as well for curioſity as trade, to Alexandria; Arabs, Ethiopians, Troglodytes, Jews, and Medes; and all were received and protected by this princeſs, who ſpoke to each of them in his own language *.

The diſcovery of Spain, and the poſſeſſion of the mines of Attica from which they drew their ſilver, and the revolution that happened in Egypt itſelf, ſeemed to have ſuperſeded the communication with the coaſt of Africa; for, in Strabo's time, few of the ports of the Indian Ocean, even thoſe neareſt the Red Sea, were known. I ſhould, indeed, ſuppoſe, that the trade to India by Egypt decreaſed from the very time of the conqueſt by Cæſar. The mines the Romans had at the ſource of the river Betis †, in Spain, did not produce them above 15,000l. a-year; this was not a ſufficient capital for carrying on the trade to India, and therefore the immenſe riches of the Romans ſeem to have been derived from the greatneſs of the prices, not from the extent of the trade. In fact ‡, we are told that 100 *per cent.* was a profit in common trade upon the Indian commodities. Egypt now, and all its neigh-

* Plut. Vita. Ant. p. 913. tom. 1. part 2. Lubec. 1624. fol.
† Strabo, lib. 3. ‡ Plin. lib. vi. cap. 23.

neighbourhood, began to wear a face of war, to which it had been a ſtranger for ſo many ages. The north of Africa was in conſtant troubles, after the firſt ruin of Carthage; ſo that we may imagine the trade to India began again, on that ſide, to be carried on pretty much in the ſame manner it had been before the days of Alexander. But it had enlarged itſelf very much on the Perſian ſide, and found an eaſy, ſhort inlet, into the north of Europe, which then furniſhed them a market and conſumption of ſpices.

I muſt confeſs, notwithſtanding, if it is true what Strabo ſays he heard himſelf in Egypt, that the Romans employed one hundred and twenty veſſels in the India trade *, it muſt at that time have loſt very little of its vigour. We muſt, however, imagine, that great part of this was for the account, and with the funds of foreign merchants. The Jews in Alexandria, until the reign of Ptolemy Phiſcon, had carried on a very extenſive part of the India trade. All Syria was mercantile; and lead, iron, and copper, ſupplied, in ſome manner, the deficiency of gold and ſilver, which never again was in ſuch abundance till after the diſcovery of America.

But the ancient trade to India, by the Arabian Gulf and Africa, carried on by the medium of theſe two metals, remained at home undiminiſhed with the Ethiopians, defended by large extenſive deſerts, and happy with the enjoyment of riches and ſecurity,

* Strabo, lib. 2. p. 81.

rity, till a freſh diſcovery again introduced to them both partners and maſters in their trade.

One of the reaſons that makes me imagine the India trade was not flouriſhing, or in great eſteem; immediately upon the Roman conqueſt of Egypt, is, that Auguſtus, very ſoon after, attempted to conquer Arabia. He ſent Elius Gallus, with an army from Egypt into Arabia, who found there a number of effeminate, timid people, ſcarcely to be driven to ſelf-defence by violence, and ignorant of every thing that related to war. Elius, however, found that they overmatched him in cunning, and the perfect knowledge of the country, which their conſtant employment as carriers had taught them. His guides led him round from hardſhip to hardſhip till his army almoſt periſhed with hunger and thirſt, without ſeeing any of thoſe riches his maſter had ſent him to take poſſeſſion of.

Thus was the Arabian expedition of Auguſtus conceived with the ſame views as thoſe of Semiramis, Cyrus, and Cambyſes, deſervedly as unhappy in its iſſue as theſe firſt had been.

That the African trade, moreover, was loſt, appears from Strabo *, and his reaſoning upon the voyage of Eudoxus, which he treats as a fable. But his reaſoning proves juſt the contrary, and this voyage was one foundation for opening this trade again, and making this coaſt more perfectly known. This likewiſe appears clear from Ptolemy †, who, ſpeaking of a promontory or cape oppoſite to Madagaſcar,

* Strabo, lib. ii. p. 98. † Ptol. lib. iv. cap. 9. p. 115.

dagaſcar, on the coaſt of Africa, ſays it was inhabited by antropophagi, or man-eaters, and that all beyond 8° ſouth was unknown, and that this cape extended to and joined the continent of India. ‡.

‡ Ptol. lib. vii. cap. 3.

CHAP

## CHAP. VI.

*Queen of Saba viſits Jeruſalem—Abyſſinian Tradition concerniag Her—Suppoſed Founder of that Monarchy—Abyſſinia embraces the Jewiſh Religion—Jewiſh Hierarchy ſtill retained by the Falaſha—Some conjectures concerning their Copy of the Old Teſtament.*

IT is now that I am to fulfil my promiſe to the reader, of giving him ſome account of the viſit made by the Queen of Sheba *, as we erroneouſly call her, and the conſequences of that viſit; the foundation of an Ethiopian monarchy, and the continuation of the ſceptre in the tribe of Judah, down to this day. If I am obliged to go back in point of time, it is, that I may preſerve both the account of the trade of the Arabian Gulf, and of this Jewiſh kingdom, diſtinct and unbroken.

We are not to wonder, if the prodigious hurry and flow of buſineſs, and the immenſely valuable tranſactions they had with each other, had greatly familiariſed the Tyrians and Jews, with their correſpondents the Cuſhites and Shepherds on the coaſt of Africa. This had gone ſo far, as very naturally to have created a deſire in the queen of Azab, the ſovereign of that country, to go herſelf and ſee the application

* It ſhould properly be Saba, Azab, or Azaba, all ſignifying *South*.

cation of ſuch immenſe treaſures that had been exported from her country for a ſeries of years, and the prince who ſo magnificently employed them. There can be no doubt of this expedition, as Pagan, Arab, Moor, Abyſſinian, and all the countries round, vouch it pretty much in the terms of ſcripture.

Many * have thought this queen was an Arab. But Saba was a ſeparate ſtate, and the Sabeans a diſtinct people from the Ethiopians and the Arabs, and have continued ſo till very lately. We know, from hiſtory, that it was a cuſtom among theſe Sabeans, to have women for their ſovereigns in preference to men, a cuſtom which ſtill ſubſiſts among their deſcendents.

——————*Medis levibuſque Sabæis,*
*Imperat hos ſexus Reginarumque ſubarmis,*
*Barbariæ* †, *pars magna jacet.* CLAUDIAN.

Her name, the Arabs ſay, was *Belkis*; the Abyſſinians, *Maqueda*. Our Saviour calls her *Queen of the South*, without mentioning any other name, but gives his ſanction to the truth of the voyage. "The Queen of the South (or Saba, or Azab) "ſhall riſe up in the judgment with this generation, "and ſhall condemn it; for ſhe came from the ut- "termoſt parts of the earth to hear the wiſ- "dom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than "Solomon is here ‡." No other particulars, however, are mentioned about her in ſcripture; and it

* Such as Juſtin, Epiphanius, Cyril.

† By this is meant the country between the tropic and mountains of Abyſſinia, the country of Shepherds, from *Berber* Shepherd. ‡ Matth. chap. xii. ver. 42. Luke xi. 31.

it is not probable our Saviour would say she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, if she had been an Arab and had near 50° of the Continent behind her. The gold, the myrrh, cassia, and frankincense, were all the produce of her own country; and the many reasons Pineda * gives to shew she was an Arab, more than convince me that she was an Ethiopian or Cushite shepherd.

A strong objection to her being an Arab, is, that the Sabean Arabs, or Homerites, the people that lived opposite to Azab on the Arabian shore, had kings instead of queens, which latter the Shepherds had, and still have. Moreover, the kings of the Homerites were never seen abroad, and were stoned to death if they appeared in public; subjects of this stamp would not very readily suffer their queen to go to Jerusalem, even supposing they had a queen, which they had not.

Whether she was a Jewess or a Pagan is uncertain; Sabaism was the religion of all the East. It was the constant attendant and stumbling-block of the Jews; but considering the multitude of that people then trading from Jerusalem, and the long time it continued, it is not improbable she was a Jewess. "And when the queen of Sheba heard "of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of "the Lord, she came to prove him with hard "questions †." Our Saviour, moreover, speaks of her with praise, pointing her out as an example to

* Pin. de reb. Solomon, lib. iv. 14.—Josephus thinks she was an Ethiopian, so do Origen; Augustin, and St. Anselmo.

† 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 1. and 2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 1.

to the Jews*. And, in her thankſgiving before Solomon, ſhe alludes to *God's bleſſing* on the *ſeed* of Iſrael for ever†, which is by no means the language of a Pagan, but of a perſon ſkilled in the ancient hiſtory of the Jews.

She likewiſe appears to have been a perſon of learning, and that ſort of learning which was then almoſt peculiar to Paleſtine, not to Ethiopia. For we ſee that one of the reaſons of her coming, was to examine whether Solomon was really the learned man he was ſaid to be. She came to try him in allegories, or parables, in which Nathan had inſtructed Solomon.

The learning of the Eaſt, and of the neighbouring kings that correſponded with each other, eſpecially in Paleſtine and Syria, conſiſted chiefly in theſe: "And Joaſh king of Iſrael ſent to Amaziah king "of Judah, ſaying, The thiſtle that was in Leba- "non ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, ſay- "ing, Give thy daughter to my ſon to wife: and "there paſſed by a wild beaſt that was in Lebanon, "and trode down the thiſtle."—"Thou ſayeſt, Lo, "thou haſt ſmitten the Edomites, and thine heart "lifteth thee up to boaſt: abide now at home, "why ſhouldeſt thou meddle to thine hurt, that "thou ſhouldeſt fall, even thou, and Judah with "thee‡?"

The annals of Abyſſinia, being very full upon this point, have taken a middle opinion, and by no

* Matt. chap. xii. ver. 42. and Luke, chap. xi. ver 31.

† 1 Kings, chap. x. ver. 9. and 2 Chron. chap. ix. ver. 8.

‡ 2 Chron. chap. xxv. ver. 18. 19.

no means an improbable one. They ſay ſhe was a Pagan when ſhe left Azab, but being full of admiration at the ſight of Solomon's works, ſhe was converted to Judaiſm in Jeruſalem, and bore him a ſon, whom ſhe called Menilek, and who was their firſt king. However ſtrongly they aſſert this, and however dangerous it would be to doubt it in Abyſſinia, I will not here aver it for truth, nor much leſs ſtill will I poſitively contradict it, as ſcripture has ſaid nothing about it. I ſuppoſe, whether true or not, in the circumſtances ſhe was, whilſt Solomon alſo, ſo far from being very nice in his choice, was particularly addicted to Idumeans*, and other ſtrange women, he could not more naturally engage himſelf in any amour than in one with the queen of Saba, with whom he had ſo long entertained the moſt lucrative connections, and moſt perfect friendſhip, and who, on her part, by ſo long a journey, had ſurely made ſufficient advances.

The Abyſſinians, both Jews and Chriſtians, believe the xlvth pſalm to be a prophecy of this queen's voyage to Jeruſalem; that ſhe was attended by a daughter of Hiram's from Tyre to Jeruſalem, and that the laſt part contains a declaration of her having a ſon by Solomon, who was to be king over a nation of Gentiles.

To Saba, or Azab, then, ſhe returned with her ſon Menilek, whom, after keeping him ſome years, ſhe ſent back to his father to be inſtructed. Solomon did not neglect his charge, and he was anointed and crowned king of Ethiopia, in the temple



* 1 Kings, chap. xi. ver. 1.

of Jeruſalem, and at his inauguration took the name of David. After this he returned to Azab, and brought with him a colony of Jews, among whom were many doctors of the law of Moſes, particularly one of each tribe, to make judges in his kingdom, from whom the preſent Umbares (or Supreme Juges, three of whom always attend the king) are ſaid and believed to be deſcended. With theſe came alſo Azarias, the ſon of Zadok the prieſt, and brought with him a Hebrew tranſcript of the law, which was delivered into his cuſtody, as he bore the title of Nebrit, or High Prieſt; and this charge, though the book itſelf was burnt with the church of Axum in the Mooriſh war of Adel, is ſtill continued, as it is ſaid, in the lineage of Azarias, who are Nebrits, or keepers of the church of Axum, at this day. All Abyſſinia was thereupon converted, and the government of the church and ſtate modelled according to what was then in uſe at Jeruſalem.

By the laſt act of the queen of Saba's reign, ſhe ſettled the mode of ſucceſſion in her country for the future. Firſt, ſhe enacted, that the crown ſhould be hereditary in the family of Solomon for ever. Secondly, that, after her, no woman ſhould be capable of wearing that crown or being queen, but that it ſhould deſcend to the heir male, however diſtant, in excluſion of all heirs female whatever, however near; and that theſe two articles ſhould be conſidered as the fundamental laws of the kingdom, never to be altered or aboliſhed. And, laſtly, That the heirs male of the royal houſe, ſhould always be ſent priſoners to a high mountain, where they

they were to continue till their death, or till the ſucceſſion ſhould be open to them.

What was the reaſon of this laſt regulation is not known, it being peculiar to Abyſſinia, but the cuſtom of having women for ſovereigns, which was a very old one, prevailed among the neighbouring ſhepherds in the laſt century, as we ſhall ſee in the courſe of this hiſtory, and, for what we know, prevails to this day. It obtained in Nubia till Auguſtus's time, when Petreius, his lieutenant in Egypt, ſubdued her country, and took the queen Candace priſoner. It endured alſo after Tiberius, as we learn from St. Philip's baptiſing the eunuch * ſervant of queen Candace, who muſt have been ſucceſſor to the former; for ſhe, when taken priſoner by Petreius, is repreſented as an infirm woman, having but one eye †. Candace indeed was the name of all the ſovereigns, in the ſame manner Cæſar was of the Roman emperors. As for the laſt ſevere part, the puniſhment of the princes, it was probably intended to prevent ſome diſorders among the princes of her houſe, that ſhe had obſerved frequently to happen in the houſe of David ‡ at Jeruſalem.

The queen of Saba having made theſe laws irrevocable to all her poſterity, died, after a long reign of forty years, in 986 before Chriſt, placing



* Acts, chap. viii. ver. 27 and 28. † This ſhews the falſehood of the remarks Strabo makes, that it was a cuſtom in Meroë, if their ſovereign, was any way mutilated, for the ſubjects to imitate the imperfection. In this caſe, Candace's ſubjects would have all loſt an eye. Strabo, lib. 17. p. 777, 778. ‡ 2 Sam. chap. xvi. ver. 22. 1 Kings, chap. ii. ver. 13.

her ſon Menilek upon the throne, whoſe poſterity, the Annals of Abyſſinia would teach us to believe have ever ſince reigned. So far we muſt indeed bear witneſs to them, that this is new doctrine, but has been ſtedfaſtly and uniformly maintained from their earlieſt account of time; firſt, when Jews, then in later days after they had embraced chriſtianity. We may further add, that the teſtimony of all the neighbouring nations is with them upon this ſubject, whether they be friends or enemies. They only differ in name of the queen, or in giving her two names.

This difference, at ſuch a diſtance of time, ſhould not break ſcores, eſpecially as we ſhall ſee that the queens in the preſent day have ſometimes three or four names, and all the kings three, whence has ariſen a very great confuſion in their hiſtory. And as for her being an Arab, the objection is ſtill eaſier got over. For all the inhabitants of Arabia Felix, eſpecially thoſe of the coaſt oppoſite to Saba, were reputed Abyſſins, and their country part of Abyſſinia, from the earlieſt ages, to the Mahometan conqueſt and after. They were her ſubjects; firſt, Sabean Pagans like herſelf, then converted (as the tradition ſays) to Judaiſm, during the time of the building of the temple, and continuing Jews from that time to the year 622 after Chriſt, when they became Mahometans.

I ſhall therefore now give a liſt of their kings of the race of Solomon, deſcended from the queen of Saba, whoſe device is a lion paſſant, proper upon a field gules, and their motto, "*Mo Anbaſa am "Nizilei Solomon am Negade Jude;*" which ſignifies,

'the

'the lion of the race of Solomon and tribe of Judah hath overcome.' The Portugueſe miſſionaries, in place of a lion paſſant, which is really the king's bearing, have given him, in ſome of their publications a lion rampant, purpoſely, as is ſuppoſed, to put a croſs into the paw of this Jewiſh lion; but he is now returned to the lion paſſant, that he was in the time of Solomon, without any ſymbol either of religion or peace in his paws.

LIST

## LIST OF THE KINGS OF ABYSSINIA,

FROM

## MAQUEDA, QUEEN OF SABA, TO THE NATIVITY.

| | Years. | | Years |
|---|---|---|---|
| Menilek, or David I. reigned | 4 | Katzina reigned, | 9 |
| Hendedya, or Zagdur, | 1 | Wazeha, | 1 |
| Awida, | 11 | Hazer, | 2 |
| Aufyi, | 3 | Kalas, | 6 |
| Sawé, | 31 | Solaya, | 16 |
| Gefaya, | 15 | Falaya, | 26 |
| Katar, | 15 | Aglebu, | 3 |
| Mouta, | 20 | Afifena, | 1 |
| Bahas, | 9 | Brus, | 29 |
| Kawida, | 2 | Mohefa, | 1 |
| Kanaza, | 10 | Bazen, | 16 |

Menilek fucceeded to the throne in the 986th year before Chrift; and this number of years muft be exhaufted in the reign of thefe twenty-two kings, when each reign, in that cafe, will amount to more than forty-four years, which is impoffible. The reign of the twenty-one kings of Ifrael, at a medium, is a little more than twenty-two years at an average, and that is thought abundantly high. And, even upon that footing of compariſon, there will be wanting a great deal more than half the number of years between Menilek and Bazen, ſo that this account is apparently falſe. But I have another very material objection to it, as well as the preceding

ing one, which is, that there is not one name in the whole liſt that has an Ethiopic root or derivation.

The reader will give what credit he pleaſes to this very ancient liſt. For my part, I content myſelf with diſproving nothing but what is impoſſible, or contrary to the authority of ſcripture, or my own private knowledge. There are other liſts ſtill, which I have ſeen, all of no better authority than this. I ſhall only obſerve, upon this laſt, that there is a king in it, about nine years before our Saviour's nativity, that did me the honour of uſing my name two thouſand years before it came into Britain, ſpelled in the ſame manner that name anciently was, before folly, and the love of novelty, wantonly corrupted it.

The Greeks, to divert the king, had told him this circumſtance, and he was exceedingly entertained at it. Sometimes, when he had ſeen either Michael, or Faſil *, or any of the great ones do me any favour, or ſpeak handſomely of me, he would ſay gravely, that he was to ſummon the council to inquire into my pedigree, whether I was deſcended of the heirs-male of that Brus who was king nine years before the nativity; that I was likely to be a dangerous perſon, and it was time I ſhould be ſent to Wechné, unleſs I choſe to loſe my leg or arm, if I was found, by the judges, related to him by the heirs-male. To which I anſwered, that however he made a jeſt of this, one of my predeceſſors was certainly a king, though not of Abyſſinia,

* What immediately follows will be hereafter explained in the Narrative.

ſinia, not nine years before, but 1200 after our redemption; that the arms of my family were a lion like his; but, however creditable his majeſty's apprehenſions as to Abyſſinia might be to me, I could venture to aſſure him, the only connections I had the honour ever to have had *with him*, were by the *heirs-female*.

At other times, when I was exceedingly low-ſpirited, and deſpairing of ever again ſeeing Britain, he, who well knew the cauſe, uſed to ſay to the Serach Maſſery, "Prepare the Sendick and Naga-"reet: let the judges be called, and the houſehold "troops appear under arms, for Brus is to be "buried: he is an Ozoro of the line of Solomon, "and, for any thing I know, may be heir to the "crown. Bring likewiſe plenty of brandy, for "they all get drunk at burials in his country." Theſe were days of ſun-ſhine, when ſuch jeſts paſſed; there were cloudy ones enough that followed, which much more than compenſated the very tranſitory enjoyment of theſe.

Although the years laid down in the book of Axum do not preciſely agree with our account, yet they are ſo near, that we cannot doubt that the revolt of the ten tribes, and deſtruction of Rehoboam's fleet which followed, occaſioned the removal of Menilek's capital to Tigré *. But whatever was the cauſe, Menilek did remove his court from

* The temple which the queen of Saba had ſeen built, and ſo richly ornamented, was plundered the 5th year of Rehoboam, by Seſac, which is 13 years before Menilek died. So this could not but have diſguſted him with the trade of his ancient habitation at Saba.

from Azab to a place near Axum, at this day called *Adega Daid*, the Houſe of David; and, at no great diſtance, is another called *Azabo*, from his ancient metropolis, where there are old remains of building of ſtone and lime, a certain proof that Axum was then fallen, elſe he would have naturally gone thither immediately upon forſaking his mother's capital of Azab.

That country, round by Cape Gardefan, and ſouth towards Sofala, along the Indian Ocean, was long governed by an officer called *Baharnagaſh*, the meaning of which is, King of the Sea, or Sea Coaſt. Another officer of the ſame title was governor of Yemen, or Arabia Felix, which, from the earlieſt times, belonged to Abyſſinia, down to the Mahometan conqueſt. The king himſelf was called *Nagaſh*, or Najaſhi, ſo were the governors of ſeveral provinces, eſpecially Gojam; and great confuſion has riſen and the multitude of theſe kings. We find, for example, ſometimes three upon the throne at one time, which is exceedingly improbable in any country. We are, therefore, to ſuppoſe, that one of theſe only is king, and two of them are the Najaſhi, or Nagaſh, we have juſt deſcribed; for, as the regulation of the queen of Saba baniſhed the heirs-male to the mountain, we cannot conceive how three brothers could be upon the throne at the ſame time, as this law ſubſiſts to the preſent day. This, although it is one, is not the only reaſon of the confuſion, as I ſhall mention another in the ſequel.

As we are about to take our leave of the Jewiſh religion and government in the line of Solomon, it is

is here the proper place that I ſhould add what we have to ſay of the Falaſha, of whom we have already had occaſion to ſpeak, when we gave a ſpecimen of their language, among thoſe of the ſtranger nations, whom we imagine to have come originally from Paleſtine. I did not ſpare my utmoſt pains in inquiring into the hiſtory of this curious people, and lived in friendſhip with ſeveral eſteemed the moſt knowing and learned among them, and I am perſuaded, as far as they knew, they told me the truth.

The account they give of themſelves, which is ſupported only by tradition among them, is, that they came with Menilek from Jeruſalem, ſo that they agree perfectly with the Abyſſinians in the ſtory of the queen of Saba, who, they ſay, was a Jeweſs, and her nation Jews before the time of Solomon; that ſhe lived at Saba, or Azaba, the myrrh and frankincenſe country upon the Arabian Gulf. They ſay further, that ſhe went to Jeruſalem, under protection of Hiram king of Tyre, whoſe daughter is ſaid in the xlvth Pſalm to have attended her thither; that ſhe went not in ſhips, nor through Arabia, for fear of the Iſhmaelites, but from Azab round by Maſuah and Suakem, and was eſcorted by the Shepherds, her own ſubjects, to Jeruſalem, and back again, making uſe of her own country vehicle, the camel, and that hers was a white one, of prodigious ſize and exquiſite beauty.

They agree alſo, in every particular, with the Abyſſinians, about the remaining part of the ſtory, the birth and inauguration of Menilek, who was their firſt king; alſo the coming of Azarias, and twelve

twelve elders from the twelve tribes, and other doctors of the law, whose posterity they deny to have ever apostatised to Christianity, as the Abyssinians pretend they did at the conversion. They say, that when the trade of the Red Sea fell into the hands of strangers, and all communication was shut up between them and Jerusalem, the cities were abandoned, and the inhabitants relinquished the coast; that they were the inhabitants of these cities, by trade mostly brick and tile-makers, potters, thatchers of houses, and such like mechanics, employed in them; and finding the low country of Dembea afforded materials for exercising these trades, they carried the article of pottery in that province to a degree of perfection scarcely to be imagined.

Being very industrious, these people multiplied exceedingly, and were very powerful at the time of the conversion to Christianity, or as they term it, the Apostacy under Abreha and Atzbeha. At this time they declared a prince of the tribe of Judah, and of the race of Solomon and Menilek, to be their sovereign. The name of this prince was Phineas, who refused to abandon the religion of his forefathers, and from him their sovereigns are lineally descended; so they have still a prince of the house of Judah, although the Abyssinians, by way of reproach, have called this family Bet Israel, intimating that they were rebels, and revolted from the family of Solomon and tribe of Judah, and there is little doubt, but that some of the successors of Azarias adhered to their ancient faith also. Although there was no bloodshed upon difference of religion,

religion, yet, each having a diſtinct king with the ſame pretenſions, many battles were fought from motives of ambition, and rivalſhip of ſovereign power.

About the year 960, an attempt was made by this family to mount the throne of Abyſſinia, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, when the princes of the houſe of Solomon were nearly extirpated upon the rock Damo. This, it is probable, produced more animoſity and bloodſhed. At laſt the power of the Falaſha was ſo much weakened, that they were obliged to leave the flat country of Dembea, having no cavalry to maintain themſelves there, and to take poſſeſſion of the rugged, and almoſt inacceſſible rocks, in that high ridge called the Mountains of Samen. One of theſe, which nature ſeems to have formed for a fortreſs, they choſe for their metropolis, and it was ever after called the Jews Rock.

A great overthrow, which they received in the year 1600, brought them to the very brink of ruin. In that battle Gideon and Judith, their king and queen, were ſlain. They have ſince adopted a more peaceable and dutiful behaviour, pay taxes, and are ſuffered to enjoy their own government. Their king and queen's name was again Gideon and Judith, when I was in Abyſſinia, and theſe names ſeem to be preferred for thoſe of the Royal family. At that time they were ſuppoſed to amount to 100,000 effective men. Something like this, the ſober and moſt knowing Abyſſinians are obliged to allow to be truth; but the circumſtances of the converſion from Judaiſm are probably not all before us.

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The only copy of the Old Teſtament, which they have, is in Geez, the ſame made uſe of by the Abyſſinian Chriſtians, who are the only ſcribes, and ſell theſe copies to the Jews; and, it is very ſingular that no controverſy, or diſpute about the text, has ever yet ariſen between the profeſſors of the two religions. They have no keriketib, or various readings; they never heard of talmud, targum, or cabala: Neither have they any *fringes* * *or ribband* upon their *garments*, nor is there, as far as I could learn, one ſcribe among them.

I aſked them, being from Judea, whence they got that language which they ſpoke, whether it was one of the languages of the nations which they had learned on the coaſt of the Red Sea. They apprehended, but it was mere conjecture, that the language which they ſpoke was that of thoſe nations they had found on the Red Sea, after their leaving Judea and ſettling there; and the reaſon they gave was certainly a pertinent one; that they came into Abyſſinia, ſpeaking Hebrew, with the advantage of having books in that language; but they had now forgot their Hebrew †, and it was therefore not probable they ſhould retain any other language in which they had no books, and which they never had learned to expreſs by letters.

I aſked them, ſince they came from Jeruſalem, how it happened they had not Hebrew, or Samaritan

* Numb. chap. xv. ver. 38, 39. Deut. chap. xxii. ver. 12.

† We ſee this happened to them in a much ſhorter time during the captivity, when they forgot the Hebrew, and ſpoke Chaldaec ever after.

tan copies of the law, at leaſt the Pentateuch or Octateuch. They ſaid they were in poſſeſſion of both when they came from Jeruſalem; but their fleet being deſtroyed, in the reign of Rehoboam, and communication becoming very uncertain by the Syrian wars, they were, from neceſſity, obliged to have the ſcriptures tranſlated, or make uſe of the copies in the hands of the Shepherds, who, according to them, before Solomon's time, were all Jews.

I aſked them where the Shepherds got their copy, becauſe, notwithſtanding the invaſion of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, who was the foreign obſtacle the longeſt in their way, the Iſhmaelite Arabs had acceſs through Arabia to Jeruſalem, and Syria, and carried on a great trade thither by land. They profeſſed very candidly they could not give a ſatisfactory anſwer to that, as the time was very diſtant, and war had deſtroyed all the memorials of theſe tranſactions. I aſked if they really ever had any memorials of their own country, or hiſtory of any other. They anſwered, with ſome heſitation, they had no reaſon to ſay they ever had any; if they had, they were all deſtroyed in the war with Gragné. This is all that I could ever learn from this people, and it required great patience and prudence in making the interrogations, and ſeparating truth from falſehood; for many of them, (as is invariably the caſe with barbarians) if they once divine the reaſon of your inquiry, will ſay whatever they think will pleaſe you.

They deny the ſceptre has ever departed from Judah, as they have a prince of that houſe reigning, and underſtand the prophecy of the gathering

thering of the Gentiles at the coming of Shiloh, is to be fulfilled on the appearance of the Meſſiah, who is not yet come, when all the inhabitants of the world are to be Jews. But I muſt confeſs they did not give an explanation of this either clearly or readily, or ſeem to have ever conſidered it before. They were not at all heated by the ſubject, nor intereſted, as far as I could diſcern, in the difference between us, nor fond of talking upon their religion at all, though very ready at all quotations, when a perſon was preſent who ſpoke Amharic, with the barbarous accent that they do; and this makes me conceive that their anceſtors were not in Paleſtine, or preſent in thoſe diſputes or tranſactions that attended the death of our Saviour, and have ſubſiſted ever after. They pretend that the book of Enoch was the firſt book of ſcripture they ever received. They knew nothing of that of Seth, but placed Jacob immediately after Enoch, ſo that they have no idea of the time in which Job lived, but ſaid they believed it to be ſoon after the flood; and they look upon the book bearing his name to be the performance of that prophet.

Many difficulties occur from this account of the Falaſha; for, though they ſay they came from Jeruſalem in the time of Solomon, and from different tribes, yet there is but one language amongſt them all, and that is not Hebrew or Samaritan, neither of which they read or underſtand; nor is their anſwer to this objection ſatisfactory, for very obvious reaſons.

Ludolf, the moſt learned man that has writ upon the ſubject, ſays, that it is apparent the Ethiopic

Old

Old Teſtament, at leaſt the Pentateuch, was copied from the Septuagint, becauſe of the many Greciſms to be found in it; and the names of birds and precious ſtones, and ſome other paſſages that appear literally to be tranſlated from the Greek. He imagines alſo, that the preſent Abyſſinian verſion is the work of Frumentius their firſt biſhop, when Abyſſinia was converted to Chriſtianity under Abreha and Atzbeha, about the year 333 after Chriſt, or a few years later.

Although I brought with me all the Abyſſinian books of the Old Teſtament, (if it is a tranſlation) I have not yet had time to make the compariſon here alluded to, but have left them, for the curioſity of the public, depoſited in the Britiſh Muſeum, hoping that ſome man of learning or curioſity would do this for me. In the mean time I muſt obſerve, that it is much more natural to ſuppoſe that the Greeks, comparing the copies together, expunged the words or paſſages they found differing from the Septuagint, and replaced them from thence, as this would not offend the Jews, who very well knew that thoſe who tranſlated the Septuagint verſion were all Jews themſelves.

Now, as the Abyſſinian copy of the Holy Scriptures, in Mr. Ludolf's opinion, was tranſlated by Frumentius above 330 after Chriſt, and the Septuagint verſion, in the days of Philadelphus or Ptolemy II. above 160 years before Chriſt, it will follow, that, if the preſent Jews uſe the copy tranſlated by Frumentius, and, if that was taken from the Septuagint, the Jews muſt have been above 400 years without any books whatſoever at the time of

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the converſion by Frumentius: So they muſt have had all the Jewiſh law, which is in perfect vigour and force among them, all their Levitical obſervances, their purifications, atonements, abſtinences, and ſacrifices, all depending upon their memory, without writing, at leaſt for that long ſpace of 400 years.

This, though not abſolutely impoſſible, is ſurely very nearly ſo. We know, that, at Jeruſalem itſelf, the ſeat of Jewiſh law and learning, idolatry happening to prevail, during the ſhort reigns of only four kings, the law, in that interval, became ſo perfectly forgotten and unknown that a copy of it being accidentally found and read by Joſiah, that prince, upon his firſt learning its contents, was ſo aſtoniſhed at the deviations from it, that he apprehended the immediate deſtruction of the whole city and people. To this I ſhall only add, that whoever conſiders the ſtiff-neckedneſs, ſtubbornneſs, and obſtinacy, which were ever the characteriſtics of this Jewiſh nation, they will not eaſily believe that they did ever *willingly* "receive the *Old* Teſtament from "a people who were the avowed champions of the "*New*."

They have, indeed, no knowledge of the New Teſtament but from converſation; and do not curſe it, but treat it as a folly where it ſuppoſes the Meſſiah come, who, they ſeem to think, is to be a temporal prince, prophet, prieſt, and conqueror.

Still, it is not probable that a Jew would receive the law and the prophets from a Chriſtian, without abſolute neceſſity, though they might very well receive ſuch a copy from a brother Jew, which all

the Abyſſinians were, when this tranſlation was made. Nor would this, as I ſay, hinder them from following a copy really made by Jews from the text itſelf, ſuch as the Septuagint actually was. But, I confeſs, great difficulties occur on every ſide, and I deſpair of having them ſolved, unleſs by an able, deliberate analyſis of the ſpecimen of the Falaſha language which I have preſerved, in which I earneſtly requeſt the concurrence of the learned. A book of the length of the Canticles contains words enough to judge upon the queſtion, Whence the Falaſha came, and what is the probable cauſe they had not a tranſlation in their own tongue, ſince a verſion became neceſſary?

I have leſs doubt that Frumentius tranſlated the New Teſtament, as he muſt have had aſſiſtance from thoſe of his own communion in Egypt; and this is a further reaſon why I believe that, at his coming, he found the Old Teſtament already tranſlated into the Ethiopic language and character, becauſe Bagla, or Geez, was an unknown letter, and the language unknown, not only to him, but likewiſe to every province in Abyſſinia, except Tigré; ſo that it would have coſt him no more pains to teach the nation the Greek character and Greek language, than to have tranſlated the New Teſtament into Ethiopic, uſing the Geez character, which was equally unknown, unleſs in Tigré. The ſaving of time and labour would have been very material to him; he he would have uſed the whole ſcriptures, as received in his own church, and the Greek letter and language would have been juſt as eaſily attained in Amhara, as the Geez; and thoſe people, even of

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the province of Tigré, that had not yet learned to read, would have written the Greek character as eaſily as their own. I do not know that ſo early there was any Arabic tranſlation of the Old Teſtament; if there was, the ſame reaſons would have militated for his preferring this; and ſtill he had but the New Teſtament to undertake. But having found the books of the Old Teſtament already tranſlated into Geez, this altered the caſe; and he, very properly, continued the goſpel in that language and letter alſo, that it might be a teſtimony for the Chriſtians, and againſt the Jews, as it was intended.

## CHAP. VII.

*Books in Uſe in Abyſſinia—Enoch—Abyſſinia not converted by the Apoſtles—Converſion from Judaiſm to Chriſtianity by Frumentius.*

THE Abyſſinians have the whole ſcriptures entire as we have, and count the ſame number of books; but they divide them in another manner, at leaſt in private hands, few of them, from extreme poverty, being able to purchaſe the whole, either of the hiſtorical or prophetical books of the Old Teſtament. The ſame may be ſaid of the New, for copies containing the whole of it are very ſcarce. Indeed no where, unleſs in churches, do you ſee more than the Goſpels, or the Acts of the Apoſtles, in one perſon's poſſeſſion, and it muſt not be an ordinary man that poſſeſſes even theſe.

Many books of the Old Teſtament are forgot, ſo that it is the ſame trouble to procure them, even in churches, for the purpoſe of copying, as to conſult old records long covered with duſt and rubbiſh. The Revelation of St. John is a piece of favourite reading among them. Its title is, *the viſion of John Abou Kalamſis,* which ſeems to meto be a corruption of *Apocalypſis.* At the ſame time, we can hardly imagine that Frumentius, a Greek and a man of letters, ſhould make ſo ſtrange a miſtake. There is no ſuch thing as diſtinctions between canonical and apocryphal

apocryphal books. Bell and the Dragon, and the Acts of the Apoſtles, are read with equal devotion, and, for the moſt part, I am afraid, with equal edification; and it is in the ſpirit of truth, and not of ridicule, that I ſay St. George and his Dragon, from idle legends only, are objects of veneration, nearly as great as any of the heroes in the Old Teſtament, or ſaints in the New. The Song of Solomon is a favourite piece of reading among the old prieſts, but forbidden to the young ones, to the deacons, laymen, and women. The Abyſſinians believe, that this ſong was made by Solomon in praiſe of Pharaoh's daughter; and do not think, as ſome of our divines are diſpoſed to do, that there is in it any myſtery or allegory reſpecting Chriſt and the church. It may be aſked, Why did I chooſe to have this book tranſlated, ſeeing that it was to be attended with this particular difficulty? To this I anſwer, The choice was not mine, nor did I at once know all the difficulty. The firſt I pitched upon was the book of Ruth, as being the ſhorteſt; but the ſubject did not pleaſe the ſcribes and prieſts who were to copy for me, and I found it would not do. They then choſe the Song of Solomon, and engaged to go through with it; and I recommended it to two or three young ſcribes, who completed the copy by themſelves and their friends. I was obliged to procure licence for theſe ſcribes whom I employed in tranſlating it into the different languages; but it was a permiſſion of courſe, and met with no real, though ſome pretended difficulty.

A nephew

A nephew of Abba Salama *, the Acab Saat, a young man of no common genius, aſked leave from his uncle before he began the tranſlation; to which Salama anſwered, alluding to an old law, That if he attempted ſuch a thing, he ſhould be killed as they do ſheep; but, if I would give *him* the money, he would permit it. I ſhould not have taken any notice of this; but ſome of the young men having told it to Ras Michael †, who perfectly gueſſed the matter, he called upon the ſcribe, and aſked what his uncle had ſaid to him; who told him very plainly, that, if he began the tranſlation, his throat ſhould be cut like that of a ſheep. One day Michael aſked Abba Salama, whether that was true; he anſwered in the affirmative, and ſeemed diſpoſed to be talkative. "Then," ſaid the Ras to the young man, "your "uncle declares, if you write the book for Ya- "goube, he ſhall cut your throat like a ſheep; "and I ſay to you, I ſwear by St. Michael, I will "put you to death like an aſs if you don't write "it; conſider with yourſelf which of the riſks "you'll run, and come to me in eight days, and "make your choice." But, before the eighth day, he brought me the book, very well pleaſed at having an excuſe for receiving the price of the copy. Abba Salama complained of this at another time when I was preſent, and the name of *frank* was invidiouſly

* I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak much of this prieſt in the ſequel. He was a moſt inveterate and dangerous enemy to all Europeans, the principal eccleſiaſtical officer in the king's houſe.

† Then Prime Miniſter, concerning whom much is to be ſaid hereafter.

vidiouſly mentioned; but he only got a ſtern look and word from Raſ: "Hold your tongue, Sir, you "don't know what you ſay; you don't know that "you are a fool, Sir, but I do; if you talk much "you will publiſh it to all the world."

After the New Teſtament they place the conſtitutions of the Apoſtles, which they call *Synnodos*, which, as far as the caſes or doctrines apply, we may ſay is the written law of the country. Theſe were tranſlated out of the Arabic. They have next a general liturgy, or book of common prayer, beſides ſeveral others peculiar to certain feſtivals, under whoſe names they go. The next is a very large voluminous book, called *Haimanout Abou*, chiefly a collection from the works of different Greek fathers, treating of, or explaining ſeveral hereſies, or diſputed points of faith, in the ancient Greek Church. Tranſlations of the works of St. Athanaſius, St. Bazil, St. Chryſoſtome, and St. Cyril, are likewiſe current among them. The two laſt I never ſaw; and only fragments of St. Athanaſius; but they are certainly extant.

The next is the Synaxar, or the Flos Sanctorum, in which the miracles and lives, or lies of their Saints, are at large, recorded, in four monſtrous volumes in folio, ſtuffed full of fables of the moſt incredible kind. They have a ſaint that wreſtled with the devil in ſhape of a ſerpent nine miles long, threw him from a mountain, and killed him. Another ſaint who converted the devil, who turned monk, and lived in great holineſs for forty years after his converſion, doing penance for having tempted our Saviour upon the mountain: what be-

came

came of him after they do not ſay. Again, another ſaint, that never ate nor drank from his mother's womb, went to Jeruſalem, and ſaid maſs every day at the holy ſepulchre, and came home at night in the ſhape of a ſtork. The laſt I ſhall mention was a ſaint, who, being very ſick, and his ſtomach in diſorder, took a longing for partridges; he called upon a brace of them to come him, and immediately two roaſted partridges came *flying*, and reſted upon his plate, to be devoured. Theſe ſtories are circumſtantially told and vouched by unexceptionable people, and were a grievous ſtumbling-block to the Jeſuits, who could not pretend their own miracles were either better eſtabliſhed, or more worthy of belief.

There are other books of leſs ſize and conſequence, particularly the Organon Denghel, or the Virgin Mary's Muſical Inſtrument, compoſed by Abba George about the year 1440, much valued for the purity of its language, though he himſelf was an Armenian. The laſt of this Ethiopic library is the book of Enoch *. Upon hearing this book firſt mentioned, many literati in Europe had a wonderful deſire to ſee it, thinking that, no doubt, many ſecrets and unknown hiſtories might be drawn from it. Upon this ſome impoſtor, getting an Ethiopic book into his hands, wrote for the title, *The Prophecies of Enoch*, upon the front page of it. M. Pieriſc † no ſooner heard of it than he purchaſed it of the impoſtor for a conſiderable ſum of money: being

* Vid. Origen contra Celſum, lib. 5. Tertull. de Idolol. c. 4. Drus in ſuo Enoch. Bangius in Cœlo Orientis Exercit. 1. quæſt. 5, and 6.

† Gaſſend. in vita Pieriſc. lib. 5.

being placed afterwards in Cardinal Mazarine's library, where Mr. Ludolf had acceſs to it, he found it was a Gnoſtic book upon myſteries in heaven and earth, but which mentioned not a word of Enoch, or his prophecy, from beginning to end; and, from this diſappointment, he takes upon him to deny the exiſtence of any ſuch book any where elſe. This, however is a miſtake; for, as a public return for the many obligations I had received from every rank of that moſt humane, polite, and ſcientific nation, and more eſpecially from the ſovereign Louis XV. I gave to his cabinet a part of every thing curious I had collected abroad; which was received with that degree of conſideration and attention that cannot fail to determine every traveller of a liberal mind to follow my example.

Amongſt the articles I conſigned to the library at Paris, was a very beautiful and magnificent copy of the prophecies of Enoch, in large quarto; another is amongſt the books of ſcripture which I brought home, ſtanding immediately before the book of Job, which is its proper place in the Abyſſinian canon; and a third copy I have preſented to the Bodleian library at Oxford, by the hands of Dr. Douglas the Biſhop of Carliſle. The more ancient hiſtory of that book is well known. The church at firſt looked upon it as apocryphal; and as it was quoted in the book of Jude, the ſame ſuſpicion fell upon that book alſo. For this reaſon, the council of Nice threw the epiſtle of Jude out of the canon, but the council of Trent arguing better, replaced the apoſtle in the canon as before.

Here

Here we may obſerve by the way, that Jude's appealing to the apocryphal books did by no means import, that either he believed or warranted the truth of them. But it was an argument, *a fortiori*, which our Saviour himſelf often makes uſe of, and amounts to no more than this, You, ſays he to the Jews, deny certain facts, which muſt be from prejudice, becauſe you have them allowed in your own books, and believe them there. And a very ſtrong and fair way of arguing it is, but this is by no means any allowance that they are true. In the ſame manner, You, ſays Jude, do not believe the coming of Chriſt and a latter judgment; yet your ancient Enoch, whom you ſuppoſe was the ſeventh from Adam, tells you this plainly, and in ſo many words, long ago. And indeed the quotation is, word for word the ſame, in the ſecond chapter of the book.

All that material to ſay further concerning the book of Enoch is, that it is a Gnoſtic book, containing the age of the Emims, Anakims, and Egregores, ſuppoſed deſcendents of the ſons of God, when they fell in love with the daughters of men, and had ſons who were giants. Theſe giants do not ſeem to have been ſo charitable to the ſons and daughters of men, as their fathers had been. For, firſt they began to eat all the beaſts of the earth, they then fell upon the birds and fiſhes, and ate them alſo; their hunger being not yet ſatisfied, they ate all the corn, all men's labour, all the trees and buſhes, and, not content yet, they fell to eating the men themſelves. The men (like our modern ſailors with the ſavages) were not afraid of dying,

but

but very much ſo of being eaten after death. At length they cry to God againſt the wrongs the giants had done them, and God ſends a flood which drowns both them and the giants.

Such is the reparation which this ingenious author has thought proper to attribute to Providence, in anſwer to the firſt, and the beſt-founded complaints that were made to him by man. I think this exhauſts about four or five of the firſt chapters. It is not the fourth part of the book; but my curioſity led me no further. The cataſtrophe of the giants, and the juſtice of the cataſtrophe, had fully ſatisfied me.

I cannot but recollect, that when it was known in England that I had preſented this book to the library of the King of France, without ſtaying a few days, to give me time to reach London, when our learned countrymen might have had an opportunity of peruſing at leiſure another copy of this book, Doctor Woide ſet out for Paris, with letters from the Secretary of State to Lord Stormont, Ambaſſador at that court, deſiring him to aſſiſt the doctor in procuring acceſs to my preſent, by permiſſion from his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty. This he accordingly obtained, and a tranſlation of the work was brought over; but, I know not why, it was no where appeared. I fancy Dr. Woide was not much more pleaſed with the conduct of the giants than I was.

I ſhall conclude with one particular, which is a curious one: The Synaxar (what the Catholics call their Flos Sanctorum, or the lives and miracles of their ſaints), giving the Hiſtory of the Abyſſinian converſion

converſion to Chriſtianity in the year 333, ſays, that when Frumentius and Œdeſius were introduced to the king, who was a minor, they found him reading the Pſalms of David.

This book, or that of Enoch, does by no means prove that they were at that time Jews. For theſe two were in as great authority among the Pagans, who profeſſed Sabaiſm, the firſt religion of the Eaſt, and eſpecially of the *Shepherds*, as among the Jews. Theſe being continued alſo in the ſame letter and character among the Abyſſinians from the beginning convinces me that there has not been any other writing in this country, or the ſouth of Arabia, ſince that which roſe from the Hieroglyphics.

The Abyſſinian hiſtory begins now to rid itſelf of part of that confuſion which is almoſt a conſtant attendant upon the very few annals yet preſerved of barbarous nations in very ancient times. It is certain, from their hiſtory, that Bazen was contemporary with Auguſtus, that he reigned ſixteen years, and that the birth of our Saviour fell on the 8th year of that prince, ſo that the 8th year of Bazen was the firſt of Chriſt.

Amha Yaſous, prince of Shoa, a province to which the ſmall remains of the line of Solomon fled upon a cataſtrophe, I ſhall have occaſion to mention, gave me the following liſt of the kings of Abyſſinia ſince the time of which we are now ſpeaking. From him I procured all the books of the Annals of Abyſſinia, which have ſerved me to compoſe this hiſtory, excepting two, one given me by the King, the other the Chronicle of Axum, by Ras Michael Governor of Tigré.

SHOA

## SHOA LIST OF PRINCES.

Bazen,
Tzenaf Segued,
Garima Asferi,
Saraada
Tzion,
Sargai,
Bagamai,
Jan Segued,
Tzion Heges,
Moal Genha,
Saif Araad,
Agedar,
Abreha and Atzbeha, 333,
Asfeha,
Arphad and Amzi,
Araad,
Saladoba,
Alamida,
Tezhana,
Caleb, 522,
Guebra Mascal,
Constantine,
Bazzer,
Azbeha,
Armaha,
Jan Asfeha,
Jan Segued,
Fere Sanai,
Aderaaz,
Aizor,

Del Naad, 960 *.

This list is kept in the monastery of Debra Libanos in Shoa; the Abyssinians receive it without any sort of doubt, though to me it seems very exceptionable: If it were genuine, it would put this monarchy in a very respectable light in point of antiquity.

Great confusion has arisen in these old lists, from their kings having always two, and sometimes three names. The first is their christened name, their second a nick, or bye-name, and the third they take upon their inauguration. There is, likewise, another

* The length of these princes reigns are so great as to become incredible; but, as we have nothing further of their history but their names, we have no data upon which to reform them.

cauſe of miſtake, which is, when two names occur, one of a king, the other the quality of a king only, theſe are ſet down as two brothers. For example, Atzbeha is the *bleſſed*, or *the ſaint*; and I very much ſuſpect, therefore, that Atzbeha and Abreha, ſaid to be two brothers, only mean Abraham the *bleſſed* or *the ſaint*; becauſe in that prince's time, the country was converted to Chriſtianity; Caleb * and Eleſbaas, were long thought to be contemporary princes, till it was found out, by inſpecting the ancient authors of thoſe times, that this was only the name or quality of *bleſſed*, or *ſaint*, given to Caleb, in conſequence of his expedition into Arabia againſt Phineas king of the Jews, and perſecutor of the Chriſtians.

There are four very intereſting events, in the courſe of the reign of theſe princes. The firſt and greateſt we have already mentioned, the birth of Chriſt in the 8th year of Bazen. The ſecond is the converſion of Abyſſinia to Chriſtianity, in the reign of Abreha and Atzbeha, in the year of Chriſt 333, according to our account. The third the war with the Jews under Caleb. The fourth, the maſſacre of the princes on the mountain of Damo. The time and circumſtances of all theſe are well known, and I ſhall relate them in their turn with the brevity becoming a hiſtorian.

Some eccleſiaſtical † writers, rather from attachment to particular ſyſtems, than from any conviction that the opinion they eſpouſe is truth, would per-

* Caleb el Atſbeha, which has been made Eleſbas throwing away the t.

† Surius Tom. 5. d. 24. Oct. Card. Baronius, Tom. 7. Annal. A. C 522. N. 23.

perſuade us, that the converſion of Abyſſinia to Chriſtianity happened at the begining of this period, that is, ſoon after the reign of Bazen; others, that Saint Matthias, or Saint Bartholomew, or ſome others of the Apoſtles, after their miſſion to teach the nations, firſt preached here the faith of Chriſt, and converted this people to it. It is alſo ſaid, that the eunuch baptized by Philip, upon his return to Candace, became the Apoſtle of that nation, which, from his preaching, believed in Chriſt and his goſpel. All theſe might paſs for dreams not worthy of examination, if they were not invented for particular purpoſes.

Till the death of Chriſt, who lived ſeveral years after Bazen, very few Jews had been converted even in Judea. We have no account in ſcripture that induces us to believe, that the Apoſtles went to any great diſtance from each other immediately after the crucifixion. Nay, we know poſitively, they did not, but lived in community together for a conſiderable time. Beſides, it is not probable if the Abyſſinians were converted by any of the Apoſtles, that, for the ſpace of 300 years, they ſhould remain without biſhops, and without church-government, in the neighbourhood of many ſtates where churches were already formed, without calling to their aſſiſtance ſome members of theſe churches, who might, at leaſt, inform them of the purport of the councils held, and canons made by them during that ſpace of 300 years; for this was abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve orthodoxy, and the communion between this, and the churches of that time. And it ſhould be obſerved, that if, in Philip's time,

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the Chriſtian religion had not penetrated (as we ſee in effect it had not) into the court of Candace, ſo much nearer Egypt, it did not ſurely reach ſo early into the more diſtant mountainous country of Abyſſinia; and if the Ethiopia, where Candace reigned, was the ſame as Abyſſinia, the ſtory of the queen of Saba muſt be given up as a falſehood; for, in that caſe, there would be a woman ſitting upon the throne of that country 500 years after ſhe was excluded by a ſolemn deliberate fundamental law of the land.

But it is known, from credible writers, engaged in no controverſy, that this Candace reigned upon the Nile in Atbara, much nearer Egypt. Her capital alſo was taken in the time of Auguſtus, a few years before the Converſion, by Philip; and we ſhall have occaſion often to mention her ſucceſſors and her kingdom, as exiſting in the reign of the Abyſſinian kings, long after the Mahometan conqueſt; they exiſted when I paſſed through Atbara, and do undoubtedly exiſt there to this day. What puts an end to all this argument is a matter of fact, which is, that the Abyſſinians continued Jews and Pagans, and were found to be ſo above 300 years after the time of the Apoſtles. Inſtead, therefore, of taking the firſt of this liſt (Bazen) for the prince under whom Abyſſinia was converted from Judaiſm, as authors have advanced, in conformity to the Abyſſinian annals, we ſhall fix upon the 13th (Abreha and Atzbeha, whom we believe to be but one prince) and, before we enter into the narrative of that remarkable event, we ſhall obſerve, that, from Bazen to Abreha, being 341 years incluſive, the

the eighth of Bazen being the firſt of Chriſt, by this account of the converſion, which happened under Abreha and Atzbeha, it muſt have been about 333 years after Chriſt, or 341 after Bazen.

But we certainly know, that the firſt biſhop, or dained for the converſion of Abyſſinia, was ſent from Alexandria by St. Athanaſius, who was himſelf ordained to that See about the year 326. Therefore, any account, prior to this ordination and converſion, muſt be falſe, and this converſion and ordination muſt have therefore happened about the year 330, or poſſibly ſome few years later; for Socrates * ſays, that St. Athanaſius himſelf was then but newly elected to the See of Alexandria.

In order to clear our way of difficulties, before we begin the narrative of the converſion, we ſhall obſerve, in this place, the reaſon I juſt hinted at, why ſome eccleſiaſtical writers had attributed the converſion of Abyſſinia to the Apoſtles. There was found, or pretended to be found in Alexandria, a canon, of a council ſaid to be that of Nice, and this canon had never before been known, nor ever ſeen in any other place, or in any language, except the Arabic; and, from inſpection, I may add, that it is ſuch Arabic that ſcarce will convey the meaning it was intended. Indeed, if it be conſtrued according to the ſtrict rule of grammar, it will not convey any ſenſe at all. This canon regulated the precedency of the Abuna of Ethiopia in all after councils, and it places him immediately after the prelate of Seleucia. This moſt honourable anti-



* Ludolf, vol. 2. lib. iii. cap. 2.

quity was looked upon and boaſted of for their own purpoſes by the Jeſuits, as a diſcovery of infinite value to the church of Ethiopia.

I ſhall only make one other obſervation to obviate a difficulty which will occur in reading what is to follow. The Abyſſinian hiſtory plainly and poſitively ſays, that when Frumentius (the apoſtle of the Abyſſinians) came firſt into that country, a queen reigned, which is an abſolute contradiction to what we have already ſtated, and would ſeem to favour the ſtory of queen Candace. To this I anſwer, That though it be true that all women are excluded from the Abyſſinian throne, yet it is as true that there is a law, or cuſtom, as ſtrictly obſerved as the other, that the queen upon whoſe head the king ſhall have put the crown in his life-time, it matters not whether it be her huſband or ſon, or any other relation, that woman is regent of the kingdom, and guardian of every minor king, as long as ſhe ſhall live. Suppoſing, therefore, a queen to be crowned by her huſband, which huſband ſhould die and leave a ſon, all the brothers and uncles of that ſon would be baniſhed. and confined priſoners to the mountain, and the queen would have the care of the kingdom, and of the king, during his minority. If her ſon, moreover, was to die, and a minor ſucceed who was a collateral, or no relation to her, brought, perhaps, from the mountain, ſhe would ſtill be regent; nor does her office ceaſe but by the king's coming of age, whoſe education, cloathing, and maintenance, ſhe, in the mean time, abſolutely directs, according to her own will; nor can there be another regent during her

her life-time. This regent, for life, is called *Iteghè*; and this was probably the ſituation of the kingdom at the time we mention, as hiſtory informs us the king was then a minor, and conſequently his education, as well as the government of his kingdom and houſehold, were, as they appear to have been, in the queen, or *Iteghè*'s hands; of this office I ſhall ſpeak more it its proper place.

Meropius, a philoſopher at Tyre, a Greek by nation and religion, had taken a paſſage in a ſhip on the Red Sea to India, and had with him two young men, Frumentius and Œdeſius, whom he intended to bring up to trade, after having given them a very liberal education. It happened their veſſel was caſt away on a rock upon the coaſt of Abyſſinia. Meropius, defending himſelf, was ſlain by the natives, and the two boys carried to Axum, the capital of Abyſſinia, where the court then reſided. Though young, they ſoon began to ſhew the advantages attending a liberal education. They acquired the language very ſpeedily; and, as that country is naturally inclined to admire ſtrangers, theſe were ſoon looked upon as two prodigies. Œdeſius, probably the dulleſt of the two, was ſet over the king's houſehold and wardrobe, a place that has been filled conſtantly by a ſtranger of that nation to this very day. Frumentius was judged worthy by the queen to have the care of the young prince's education, to which he dedicated himſelf entirely.

After having inſtructed his pupil in all ſorts of learning, he ſtrongly impreſſed him with a love and veneration for the Chriſtian religion; after which he himſelf ſet out for Alexandria, where, as has

been already ſaid, he found St. Athanaſius * newly elected to that See.

He related to him briefly what had paſſed in Ethiopia, and the great hopes of the converſion of that nation, if proper paſtors were ſent to inſtruct them. Athanaſius embraced that opportunity with all the earneſtneſs that became his ſtation and profeſſion. He ordained Frumentius biſhop of that country, who inſtantly returned and found the young king his pupil in the ſame good diſpoſition as formerly; he embraced Chriſtianity; the greateſt part of Abyſſinia followed his example, and the church of Ethiopia continued with his biſhop in perfect unity and friendſhip till his death; and though great troubles aroſe from hereſies being propagated in the Eaſt, that church, and the fountain whence it derived its faith (Alexandria,) remained uncontaminated by any falſe doctrine.

But it was not long after this, that Arianiſm broke out under Conſtantius the Emperor, and was ſtrongly favoured by him. We have indeed a letter of St. Athanaſius to that Emperor, who had applied to him to depoſe Frumentius from his See for refuſing to embrace that hereſy, or admit it into his dioceſe.

It ſhould ſeem, that this converſion of Abyſſinia was quietly conducted, and without blood; and this is the more remarkable, that it was the ſecond radical change of religion, effected in the ſame manner, and with the ſame facility and moderation. No fanatic preachers, no warm ſaints or madmen, ambitious

* Vid. Baron, tom. 4. p. 331. et alibi paſſim.

ambitious to make or to be made martyrs, diſturbed either of theſe happy events, in this wiſe, though barbarous nation, ſo as to involve them in bloodſhed: no perſecution was the conſequence of this difference of tenets, and if wars did follow, it was from matters merely temporal.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

*War of the Elephant—First appearance of the Small-Pox—Jews persecute the Christians in Arabia—Defeated by the Abyssinians—Mahomet pretends a divine Mission—Opinion concerning the Koran—Revolution under Judith—Restoration of the Line of Solomon from Shoa.*

IN the reigns of the princes Areha and Atzbeha, the Abyssinian annals mention an expedition to have happened into the farthest part of Arabia Felix, which the Arabian authors, and indeed Mahomet himself in the Koran calls by the name of the War of the Elephant, and the cause of it was this. There was a temple nearly in the middle of the peninsula of Arabia, that had been held in the greatest veneration for about 1400 years. The Arabs say, that Adam, when shut out of paradise, pitched his tent on this spot; while Eve, from some accident or other I am not acquainted with, died and was buried on the shore of the Red Sea, at Jidda. Two days journey east from this place, her grave, of green sods about fifty yards in length, is shewn to this day. In this temple also was a black stone, upon which Jacob saw the vision mentioned in scripture, of the angels descending, and ascending into Heaven. It is likewise said, with more appearance of probability, that this temple

was

was built by Seſoſtris, in his voyage to Arabia Felix, and that he was worſhipped there under the name of Oſiris, as he then was in every part of Egypt.

The great veneration the neighbouring nations paid to this tower, and idol, ſuggeſted the very natural thought of making the temple the market for the trade from Africa and India; the liberty of which, we may ſuppoſe, had been in ſome meaſure reſtrained, by the ſettlements which foreign nations had made on both coaſts of the Red Sea. To remedy which, they choſe this town in the heart of the country, acceſſible on all ſides, and commanded on none, calling it Becca, which ſignifies the Houſe; though Mahomet, after breaking the idol and dedicating the temple to the true God, named it Mecca, under which name it has been continued, the centre or great mart of the India trade to this day.

In order to divert this trade into a channel more convenient for his preſent dominions, Abreha built a very large church or temple, in the country of the Homerites, and nearer the Indian Ocean. To encourage alſo the reſort to this place, he extended to it all the privileges, protection, and emoluments, that belonged to the Pagan temple of Mecca.

One particular tribe of Arabs, called Beni Koreiſh, had the care of the Caba, for ſo the round tower of Mecca was called. Theſe people were exceedingly alarmed at the proſpect of their temple being at once deſerted, both by its votaries and merchants, to prevent which, a party of them, in the night, entered Abreha's temple, and having firſt burned what part of it could be conſumed, they polluted

luted the part that remained, by beſmearing it over with human excrements.

This violent ſacrilege and affront was ſooner ported to Abreha, who, mounted upon a white elephant at the head of a conſiderable army, reſolved, in return, to deſtroy the temple of Mecca. With this intent, he marched through that ſtripe of low country along the ſea, called Tehama, where he met with no oppoſition, nor ſuffered any diſtreſs but from want of water; after which, at the head of his army, he ſat down before Mecca, as he ſuppoſed.

Abou Thaleb (Mahomet's grandfather, as it is thought) was then keeper of the Caba, who had intereſt with his countrymen the Beni Koreiſh to prevail upon them to make no reſiſtance, nor ſhew any ſigns of wiſhing to make a defence. He had preſented himſelf early to Abreha upon his march. There was a temple of Oſiris at Taief, which, as a rival to that of Mecca, was looked upon by the Beni Koreiſh with a jealous eye. Abreha was ſo far miſled by the intelligence given him by Abou Thaleb, that he miſtook the Temple of Taief for that of Mecca, and razed it to the foundation, after which he prepared to return home.

He was ſoon after informed of his miſtake, and not repenting of what he had already done, reſolved to deſtroy Mecca alſo. Abou Thaleb, however, had never left his ſide; by his great hoſpitality, and the plenty he procured to the Emperor's army, he ſo gained Abreha, that hearing, on enquiry, he was no mean man, but a prince of the tribe of Beni Koreiſh, noble Arabs, he obliged him to ſit in his preſence,

preſence, and kept him conſtantly with him as a companion. At laſt, not knowing how to reward him ſufficiently, Abreha deſired him to aſk any thing in his power to grant, and he would ſatisfy him. Abou Thaleb, taking him at his word, wiſhed to be provided with a man, that ſhould bring back forty oxen, the ſoldiers had ſtolen from him.

Abreha, who expected that the favour he was to aſk, was to ſpare the Temple, which he had in that caſe reſolved in his mind to do, could not conceal his aſtoniſhment at ſo ſilly a requeſt, and he could not help teſtifying this to Abou Thaleb, in a manner that ſhewed it had lowered him in his eſteem. Abou Thaleb, ſmiling, replied very calmly, If that before you is the Temple of God, as I believe it is, you ſhall never deſtroy it, if it is his will that it ſhould ſtand: If it is not the Temple of God, or, (which is the ſame thing) if he has ordained that you ſhould deſtroy it, I ſhall not only aſſiſt you in demoliſhing it, but ſhall help you in carrying away the laſt ſtone of it upon my ſhoulders: But as for me, I am a ſhepherd, and the care of cattle is my profeſſion; twenty of the oxen which are ſtolen are not my own, and I ſhall be put in priſon for them to-morrow; for neither you nor I can believe that this is an affair God will interfere in; and therefore I apply to you for a ſoldier who will ſeek the thief, and bring back my oxen, that my liberty be not taken from me.

Abreha had now refreſhed his army, and, from regard to his gueſt, had not touched the Temple; when, ſays the Arabian author, there appeared, coming from the ſea, a flock of birds called Ababil, having

having faces like lions, and each of them in his claws, holding a ſmall ſtone like a pea, which he let fall upon Abreha's army, ſo that they all were deſtroyed. The author of the manuſcript * from which I have taken this fable, and which is alſo related by ſeveral other hiſtorians, and mentioned by Mahomet in the Koran, does not ſeem to ſwallow the ſtory implicitly. For he ſays, that there is no bird that has a face like a lion, that Abou Thaleb was a Pagan, Mahomet being not then come, and that the Chriſtians were worſhippers of the true God, the God of Mahomet; and, therefore, if any miracle was wrought here, it was a miracle of the devil, a victory in favour of Paganiſm, and deſtructive of the belief of the true God. In concluſion, he ſays, that it was at this time that the ſmall-pox and meaſles firſt broke out in Arabia, and almoſt totally deſtoyed the army of Abreha. But if the ſtone, as big as a pea, thrown by the Ababil, had killed Abreha's army to the laſt man, it does not appear how any of them could die afterwards, either by the ſmall-pox or meaſles.

All that is material, however, to us, in this fact, is, that the time of the ſiege of Mecca will be the æra of the firſt appearance of that terrible diſeaſe, the ſmall-pox, which we ſhall ſet down about the year 356; and it is highly probable, from other circumſtances, that the Abyſſinian army was the firſt victim to it.

As for the church Abreha built near the Indian Ocean, it continued free from any further inſult till the

* El. Hameeſy's Siege of Mecca.

the Mahometan conqueſt of Arabia Felix, when it was finally deſtroyed in the Khalifat * of Omar. This is the Abyſſinian account, and this the Arabian hiſtory of the War of the Elephant, which I have ſtated as found in the books of the moſt credible writers of thoſe times.

But it is my duty to put the reader upon his guard, againſt adopting literally what is here ſet down, without being ſatisfied of the validity of the objection that may be made againſt the narrative in general. Abreha reigned 27 years; he was converted to Chriſtianity in 333, and died in 360; now, it is ſcarcely poſſible, in the ſhort ſpace of 27 years, that all Abyſſinia and Arabia could be converted to Chriſtianity. The converſion of the Abyſſinians is repreſented to be a work of little time, but the Arab author, Hameeſy, ſays, that even Arabia Felix was full of churches when this expedition took place, which is very improbable. And, what adds ſtill more to the improbability, is, that part of the ſtory which ſtates that Abreha converſed with Mahomet's father, or grandfather. For, ſuppoſing the expedition in 356, Mahomet's birth was in 558, ſo there will remain 202 years, by much too long a period for two lives. I do believe we muſt bring this expedition down much lower than the reign of Abreha and Atzbeha, the reaſon of which we ſhall ſee afterwards.

As early as the commencement of the African trade with Paleſtine, the Jewiſh religion had ſpread itſelf far into Arabia, but, after the deſtruction of the

* Fetaat el Yemen.

the temple by Titus, a great increaſe both of number and wealth had made that people abſolute maſters in many parts of that peninſula. In the Neged, and as far up as Medina, petty princes, calling themſelves kings, were eſtabliſhed; who, being trained in the wars of Paleſtine, became very formidable among the pacific commercial nations of Arabia, deeply ſunk into Greek degeneracy.

Phineas, a prince of that nation from Medina, having beat St. Aretas, the Governor of Najiran, began to perſecute the Chriſtians by a new ſpecies of cruelty, by ordering certain furnaces, or pits full of fire, to be prepared, into which he threw as many of the inhabitants of Najiran as refuſed to renounce Chriſtianity. Among theſe was Aretas, ſo called by the Greeks, Aryat by the Arabs, and Hawaryat, which ſignifies the *evangelical*, by the Abyſſinians, together with ninety of his companions. Mahomet, in his Koran, mentions, this tyrant by the name of the Maſter of the *fiery pits*, without either condemning or praiſing the execution; only ſaying, 'the ſufferers ſhall be witneſs againſt him at the laſt day.'

Juſtin, the Greek Emperor, was then employed in an unſucceſsful war with the Perſians, ſo that he could not give any aſſiſtance to the afflicted Chriſtians in Arabia, but in the year 522 he ſent an embaſſy to Caleb, or Eleſbaas, king of Abyſſinia, intreating him to interfere in favour of the Chriſtians of Najiran, as he too was of the Greek church. On the Emperor's firſt requeſt, Caleb ſent orders to Abreha, Governor of Yemen, to march to the aſſiſtance of Aretas, the ſon of him who was burnt,

and

and who was then collecting troops. Strengthened by this reinforcement, the young ſoldier did not think proper to delay the revenging his father's death, till the arrival of the Emperor; but having come up with Phineas, who was ferrying his troops over an arm of the ſea, he entirely routed them, and obliged their prince, for fear of being taken, to ſwim with his horſe to the neareſt ſhore. It was not long before the Emperor had croſſed the Red Sea with his army; nor had Phineas loſt any time in collecting his ſcattered forces to oppoſe him. A battle was the conſequence, in which the fortune of Caleb again prevailed.

It would appear that the part of Arabia, near Najiran, which was the ſcene of Caleb's victory, belonged to the Grecian Emperor Juſtin, becauſe Aretas applied directly to him at Conſtantinople for ſuccour; and it was at Juſtin's requeſt only, that Caleb marched to the aſſiſtance of Aretas, as a friend, but not as a ſovereign; and as ſuch alſo, Abreha, Governor of Yemen, marched to aſſiſt Aretas, with the Abyſſinian troops, from the ſouth of Arabia, againſt the ſtranger Jews, who were invaders from Paleſtine, and who had no connection with the Abyſſinian Jewiſh Homerites, natives of the ſouth coaſt of Arabia, oppoſite to Saba.

But neither of the Jewiſh kingdoms were deſtroyed by the victories of Caleb, or Abreha, nor the ſubſequent conqueſt of the Perſians. In the Neged, or north part of Arabia, they continued not only after the appearance of Mahomet, but till after the Hegira. For it was in the 8th year of that æra that Hybar, the Jew, was beſieged in his own caſtle

caſtle in Neged, and ſlain by Ali, Mahomet's ſon-in-law, from that time called Hydar Ali, or Ali the Lion.

Now the Arabian manuſcripts ſays poſitively that this Abreha, who aſſiſted Aretas, was Governor of Arabia Felix, or Yemen; for, by this laſt name, I ſhall hereafter call the part of the peninſula of Arabia belonging to the Abyſſinians; ſo that he might very well have been the prince who converſed with Mahomet's father, and loſt his army before Mecca, which will bring down the introduction of the ſmall-pox to the year 522, juſt 100 years before the Hegira, and both Arabian and Abyſſinian accounts might be then true.

The two officers who governed Yemen, and the oppoſite coaſt Azab, which, as we have above-mentioned, belonged to Abyſſinia, were ſtiled *Najaſhi*, as was the king alſo, and both of them were crowned with gold. I am, therefore, perſuaded, this is the reaſon of the confuſion of names we meet in Arabian manuſcripts, that treat of the ſovereigns of Yemen. This, moreover, is the foundation of the ſtory found in Arabic manuſcripts, that Jaffar, Mahomet's brother, fled to the Najaſhi, who was governor of Yemen, and was kindly treated by him, and kept there till he joined his brother at the campaign of Hybarea. Soon after his great victory over the Beni Koreiſh, at the laſt battle of Beder Hunein, Mahomet is ſaid to have written to the ſame Najaſhi a letter of thanks, for his kind entertainment of his brother, inviting him (as a reward) to embrace his religion, which the Najaſhi is ſuppoſed to have immediately complied with.

with. Now all this is in the Arabic books, and all this is true, as far as we can conjecture from the accounts of thoſe times, very partially writ by a ſet of warm-headed bigotted zealots; ſuch as all Arabic authors (hiſtorians of the time) undoubtedly are. The error only lies in the application of this ſtory to the Najaſhi, or king of Abyſſinia, ſituated far from the ſcene of theſe actions, on high cold mountains, very unfavourable to thoſe rites, which, in low flat and warm countries, have been temptations to ſlothful and inactive men to embrace the Mahometan religion.

A moſt ſhameful proſtitution of manners prevailed in the Greek church, as alſo innumerable hereſies, which were firſt received as true tenets of their religion, but were ſoon after perſecuted in a moſt uncharitable manner, as being erroneous. Their lies, their legends, their ſaints and miracles, and, above all, the abandoned behaviour of the prieſthood, had brought their characters in Arabia almoſt as low as that of the deteſted Jew, and, had they been conſidered in their true light, they had been ſtill lower.

The dictates of nature in the heart of the honeſt Pagan, conſtantly employed in long, lonely, and dangerous voyages, awakened him often to reflect who that Providence was that inviſibly governed him, ſupplied his wants, and often mercifully ſaved him from the deſtruction into which his own ignorance or raſhneſs were leading him. Poiſoned by no ſyſtem, perverted by no prejudice, he wiſhed to know and adore his Benefactor, with purity and

ſimplicity

ſimplicity of heart free from theſe fopperies and follies with which ignorant prieſts and monks had diſguiſed his worſhip. Poſſeſſed of charity, ſteady in his duty to his parents, full of veneration for his ſuperiors, attentive and merciful even to his beaſts; in a word containing in his heart the principles of the firſt religion, which God had inculcated in the heart of Noah, the Arab was already prepared to embrace a much more perfect one than what Chriſtianity, at that time, diſfigured by folly and ſuperſtition, appeared to him to be.

Mahomet, of the tribe of Beni Koreiſh (at whoſe inſtigation is uncertain) took upon himſelf to be the apoſtle of a new religion, pretending to have, for his only object, the worſhip of the true God. Oſtenſibly full of the morality of the Arab, of patience and ſelf-denial, ſuperior even to what is made neceſſary to ſalvation by the goſpel, his religion, at the bottom, was but a ſyſtem of blaſphemy and falſehood, corruption and injuſtice. Mahomet and his tribe were moſt profoundly ignorant. There was not among them but one man that could write, and it was not doubted he was to be Mahomet's ſecretary, but unfortunately Mahomet could not read his writing. The ſtory of the angel who brought him leaves of the Koran is well known, and ſo is all the reſt of the fable. The wiſer part of his own relations, indeed, laughed at the impudence of his pretending to have a communication with angels. Having, however, gained, as his apoſtles, ſome of the beſt ſoldiers of the tribe of Beni Koreiſh, and perſiſting with great uniformity in all his meaſures, he eſtabliſhed a new religion upon

upon the ruins of idolatry and Sabaiſm, in the very temple of Mecca.

Nothing ſevere was injoined by Mahomet, and the frequent prayers and waſhings with water which he directed, were gratifications to a ſedentary people in a very hot country. The lightneſs of this yoke, therefore, recommended it rapidly to thoſe who were diſguſted with long faſting, penances, and pilgrimages. The poiſon of this falſe yet not ſevere religion, ſpread itſelf from that fountain to all the trading nations: India, Ethiopia, Africa, all Aſia, ſuddenly embraced it; and every caravan carried into the boſom of its country people not more attached to trade, than zealous to preach and propagate their new faith. The Temple of Mecca (the old rendezvous of the India trade) perhaps was never more frequented than it is at this day, and the motives of the journey are equally trade and religion, as they were formerly.

I ſhall here mention, that the Arabs begun very ſoon to ſtudy letters, and came to be very partial to their own language; Mahomet himſelf ſo much ſo, that he held out his Koran, for its elegance alone, as a greater miracle than that of raiſing the dead. This was not univerſally allowed at that time; as there were even then compoſitions ſuppoſed to equal, if not to ſurpaſs it. In my time, I have ſeen in Britain a ſpirit of enthuſiaſm for this book in preference to all others, not inferior to that which poſſeſſed Mahomet's followers. Modern unbelievers (Sale and his diſciples) have gone every length, but to ſay directly that it was dictated by the Spirit of God. Excepting the command in

Geneſis, chap. i. ver. 3. "And God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light;" they defy us to ſhew in ſcripture a paſſage equal in ſublimity to many in the Koran. Following, without inquiring, what has been handed down from one to the other, they would cram us with abſurdities, which no man of ſenſe can ſwallow. They ſay the Koran is compoſed in a ſtyle the moſt pure, and chaſte, and that the tribe of Beni Koreiſh was the moſt polite, learned and noble of all the Arabs.

But to this I anſwer—The Beni Koreiſh were from the earlieſt days, according to their own * account, part eſtabliſhed at Mecca, and part as robbers on the ſea-coaſt, and they were all children of Iſhmael. Whence then came their learning, or their ſuperior nobility? Was it found in the deſert, in the temple, or did the robbers bring it from the ſea? Soiouthy, one of thoſe moſt famous then for knowledge in the Arabic, has quoted from the Koran many hundred words, either Abyſſinian, Indian, Perſian, Ethiopic, Syrian, Hebrew, or Chaldaic, which he brings back to the root, and aſcribes them to the nation they came from. Indeed it could not be otherwiſe; theſe caravans, continually crowding with their trade to Mecca, muſt have vitiated the original tongue by an introduction of new terms and new idioms, into a language labouring under a penury of vocabules. But ſhall any one for this perſuade me, that a book is a model of pure, elegant, chaſte Engliſh, in which there ſhall be a thouſand words of Welſh, Iriſh, Gaelic, French, Spaniſh, Malabar, Mexican, and Laponian? What would

* El Hameeſy.

would be thought of ſuch a medley? or, at leaſt, could it be recommended as a pattern for writing pure Engliſh?

What I ſay of the Koran may be applied to the language of Arabia in general: when it is called a copious language, and profeſſors wiſely tell you, that there are ſix hundred words for a ſword, two hundred for honey, and three hundred that ſignify a lion, ſtill I muſt obſerve, that this is not a copious language, but a confuſion of languages: theſe, inſtead of diſtinct names, are only different epithets. For example, a lion in Engliſh may be called a young lion, a white lion, a ſmall lion, a big lion: I ſtyle him moreover the fierce, the cruel, the enemy to man, the beaſt of the deſert, the king of beaſts, the lover of blood. Thus it is in Arabic; and yet it is ſaid that all theſe are words for a lion. Take another example in a ſword; the cutter, the divider, the friend of man, the maſter of towns, the maker of widows, the ſharp, the ſtraight, the crooked; which may be ſaid in Engliſh as well as in Arabic.

The Arabs were a people who lived in a country for the moſt part, deſert; their dwellings were tents, and their principal occupation feeding and breeding cattle, and they married their own family. The language therefore of ſuch a people ſhould be very poor; there is no variety of images in their whole country. They were always bad poets, as their works will teſtify; and if contrary to the general rule, the language of Arabia Deſerta became a copious one, it muſt have been by the mixture of ſo many nations meeting and trading at Mecca. It

muſt, at the ſame time, have been the moſt corrupt, where there was the greateſt concourſe of ſtrangers, and this was certainly among the Beni Koreiſh at the Caba. When, therefore, I hear people praiſing the Koran for the purity of its ſtyle, it puts me in mind of the old man in the comedy, whoſe reaſon for loving his nephew was, that he could read Greek; and being aſked if he underſtood the Greek ſo read, he anſwered, Not a word of it, but the rumbling of the ſound pleaſed him.

The war that had diſtracted all Arabia, firſt between the Greeks and Perſians, the ubetween Mahomet and the Arabs, in ſupport of his divine miſſion, had very much hurt the trade carried on by univerſal conſent at the temple of Mecca. Caravans, when they dared venture out, were ſurpriſed upon every road, by the partizans of one ſide or the other. Both merchants and trade had taken their departure to the ſouthward, and eſtabliſhed themſelves ſouth of the Arabian Gulf, in places which (in ancient times) had been the markets for commerce, and the rendezvous of merchants. Azab, or Saba, was rebuilt; alſo Raheeta, Zeyla, Tajoura, Soomaal, in the Arabian Gulf, and a number of other towns on the Indian Ocean. The conqueſt of the Abyſſinian territories in Arabia forced all thoſe that yet remained to take refuge on the African ſide, in the little diſtricts which now grew into conſideration. Adel, Mara, Hadea, Auſſa, Wypo, Tarſhiſh, and a number of other ſtates, now aſſumed the name of kingdoms, and ſoon obtained power and wealth ſuperior to many older ones.

The Governor of Yemen (or Najaſhi) converted now to the faith of Mahomet, retired to the Afri-

can

can ſide of the Gulf. His government, long ago, having been ſhaken to the very foundation by the Arabian war, was at laſt totally deſtroyed. But the Indian trade at Adel wore a face of proſperity, that had the features of ancient times.

Without taking notice of every objection, and anſwering it, which has too polemical an appearance for a work of this kind, I hope I have removed the greateſt part of the reader's difficulties, which have, for a long time, lain in the way, towards his underſtanding this part of the hiſtory. There is one however, remains, which the Arabian hiſtorians have mentioned, viz. that this Najaſhi, who embraced the faith of Mahomet, was avowedly of the royal family of Abyſſinia. To this I anſwer, he certainly was a perſon of that rank, and was undoubtedly a nobleman, as there is no nobility in that country but from relationſhip to the king, and no perſon can be related to the king by the male line. But the females, even the daughters of thoſe princes who are baniſhed to the mountain, marry whom they pleaſe; and all the deſcendents of that marriage become noble, becauſe they muſt be allied to the king. So far then they may truly aſſert, that the Mahometan Governor of Yemen, and his poſterity, were this way related to the king of Abyſſinia. But the ſuppoſition that any heirs male of this family became muſſulmen, is, beyond any ſort of doubt, without foundation or probability.

Omar, after ſubduing Egypt, deſtroyed the valuable library at Alexandria, but his ſucceſſors thought very differently from him in the article of profane learning. Greek books of all kinds (eſpecially

thoſe

thoſe of Geometry, Aſtronomy, and Medicine,) were ſearched for every where and tranſlated. Sciences flouriſhed and were encouraged. Trade at the ſame time kept pace, and increaſed with knowledge. Geography and aſtronomy were every where diligently ſtudied and ſolidly applied to make the voyages of men from place to place ſafe and expeditious. The Jews (conſtant ſervants of the Arabs) imbibed a conſiderable ſhare of their taſte for learning.

They had, at this time, increaſed very much in number. By the violence of the Mahometan conqueſts in Arabia and Egypt, where their ſect did principally prevail, they became very powerful in Abyſſinia. Arianiſm, and all the various hereſies that diſtracted the Greek church, were received there in their turn from Egypt; the bonds of Chriſtianity were diſſolved, and people in general were much more willing to favour a new religion, than to agree with, or countenance any particular one of their own, if it differed from that which they adopted in the meereſt trifle. This had deſtroyed their metropolis in Egypt, juſt now delivered up to the Saracens; and the diſpoſition of the Abyſſinians ſeemed ſo very much to reſemble their brethren the Cophts, that a revolution in favour of Judaiſm was thought full as feaſible in the country, as it had been in Egypt in favour of the newly-preached, but unequivocal religion of Mahomet.

An independent ſovereignty, in one family of Jews had always been preſerved on the mountain of Samen, and the royal reſidence was upon a high-pointed rock, called the Jews Rock: Several other inacceſſible

inacceſſible mountains ſerved as natural fortreſſes for this people, now grown very conſiderable by frequent acceſſions of ſtrength from Paleſtine and Arabia, whence the Jews had been expelled. Gideon and Judith were then king and queen of the Jews, and their daughter Judith (whom in Amhara they call *Eſther*, and ſometimes *Saát*, i. e. *fire* *,) was a woman of great beauty, and talents for intrigue; had been married to the governor of a ſmall diſtrict called Bugna, in the neighbourhood of Laſta, both which countries were likewiſe much infected with Judaiſm.

Judith had made ſo ſtrong a party, that ſhe reſolved to attempt the ſubverſion of the Chriſtian religion, and, with it, the ſucceſſion in the line of Solomon. The children of the royal family were at this time, in virtue of the old law, confined on the almoſt inacceſſible mountain of Damo in Tigré. The ſhort reign, ſudden and unexpected death of the late king Aizor, and the deſolation and contagion which an epidemical diſeaſe had ſpread both in court and capital, the weak ſtate of Del Naad who was to ſucceed Aizor and was an infant; all theſe circumſtances together, impreſſed Judith with an idea that now was the time to place her family upon the throne, and eſtabliſh her religion by the extirpation of the race of Solomon. Accordingly ſhe ſurpriſed the rock Damo, and ſlew the whole princes there, to the number, it is ſaid, of about 400.

Some nobles of Amhara, upon the firſt news of the cataſtrophe at Damo, conveyed the infant king Del

* She is alſo called by Victor, *Tredda Gahez*.

Del Naad, now the only remaining prince of his race, into the powerful and loyal province of Shoa, and by this means the royal family was preſerved to be again reſtored. Judith took poſſeſſion of the throne in defiance of the law of the queen of Saba, by this the firſt interruption of the ſucceſſion in the line of Solomon, and, contrary to what might have been expected from the violent means ſhe had uſed to acquire the crown, ſhe not only enjoyed it herſelf during a long reign of 40 years, but tranſmitted it alſo to five of her poſterity, all of them barbarous names, originating probably in Laſta: Theſe are ſaid to be,

Totadem,
Jan Shum,
Garima Shum,
Harbai,
Marari.

Authors, as well Abyſſinian as European, have differed widely about the duration of theſe reigns. All that the Abyſſinians are agreed upon is, that this whole period was one ſcene of murder, violence, and oppreſſion.

Judith and her deſcendents were ſucceeded by relations of their own, a noble family of Laſta. The hiſtory of this revolution, or cauſe of it, are loſt and unknown in the country, and therefore vainly ſought after elſewhere. What we know is, that with them the court returned to the Chriſtian religion, and that they were ſtill as different from their predeceſſors inmanners as in religion. Though uſurpers, as were the others, their names are preſerved with every mark of reſpect and veneration. They are,

Tecla

Tecla Haimanout,
Kedus Harbé,
Itibarek,
Lalibala,
Imeranha Chriſtos,
Naacueto Laab.

Not being kings of the line of Solomon, no part of their hiſtory is recorded in the annals, unleſs that of Lalibala, who lived in the end of the twelfth, or beginning of the thirteenth century, and was a ſaint. The whole period of the uſurpation, comprehending the long reign of Judith, will by this account be a little more than 300 years, in which time eleven princes are ſaid to have ſat upon the throne of Solomon, ſo that ſuppoſing her death to have been in the year 1000, each of theſe princes, at an average, will have been a little more than twenty-four years, and this is too much But all this period is involved in darkneſs. We might gueſs, but ſince we are not able to do more, it anſwers no good purpoſe to do ſo much. I have followed the hiſtories and traditions which are thought the moſt authentic in the country, the ſubject of which they treat, and where I found them; and though they may differ from other accounts given by European authors, this does not influence me, as I know that none of theſe authors could have any other authorities than thoſe I have ſeen, and the difference only muſt be the fruit of idle imagination, and ill-founded conjectures of their own.

In the reign of Lalibala, near about the 1200, there was a great perſecution in Egypt againſt the Chriſtians, after the Saracen conqueſt, and eſpecially againſt

againſt the maſons, builders, and hewers of ſtone, who were looked upon by the Arabs as the greateſt of abominations; this prince opened an aſylum in his dominions to all fugitives of that kind, of whom he collected a prodigious number. Having before him as ſpecimens the ancient works of the Troglodytes, he directed a number of churches to be hewn out of the ſolid rock in his native country of Laſta, where they remain untouched to this day, and where they will probably continue till the lateſt poſterity. Large columns within are formed out of the ſolid rock, and every ſpecies of ornament preſerved, that would have been executed in buildings of ſeparate and detached ſtones, above ground.

This prince undertook to realize the favourite pretenſions of the Abyſſinians, to the power of turning the Nile out of its courſe, ſo that it ſhould no longer be the cauſe of the fertility of Egypt, now in poſſeſſion of the enemies of his religion. We may imagine, if it was in the power of man to accompliſh this undertaking, it could have fallen into no better hands than thoſe to whom Lalibala gave the execution of it; people driven from their native country by thoſe Saracens who now were reaping the benefits of the river, in the places of thoſe they had forced to ſeek habitations far from the benefit and pleaſure afforded by its ſtream.

This prince did not adopt the wild idea of turning the courſe of the Nile out of its preſent channel; upon the poſſibility or impoſſibility of which, the argument (ſo warmly and ſo long agitated) always moſt improperly turns. His idea was to famiſh Egypt: and, as the fertility of that country depends not upon

upon the ordinary ſtream, but the extraordinary increaſe of it by the tropical rains, he is ſaid to have found, by an exact ſurvey and calculation, that there ran on the ſummit, or higheſt part of the country, ſeveral rivers which could be intercepted by mines, and their ſtream directed into the low country ſouthward, inſtead of joining the Nile, augmenting it and running northward. By this he found he ſhould be able ſo to diſappoint its increaſe, that it never would riſe to a height proper to fit Egypt for cultivation. And thus far he was warranted in his ideas of ſucceeding (as I have been informed by the people of that country), that he did interſect and carry into the Indian Ocean, two very large rivers, which have ever ſince flowed that way, and he was carrying a level to the lake Zawaia, where many rivers empty themſelves in the beginning of the rains, which would have effectually diverted the courſe of them all, and could not but in ſome degree diminiſh the current below.

Death, the ordinary enemy of all theſe ſtupenduous Herculean undertakings, interpoſed too here, and put a ſtop to this enterprize of Lalibala. But Amha Yaſous, prince of Shoa (in whoſe country part of theſe immenſe works were) a young man of great underſtandiug, and with whom I lived ſeveral months in the moſt intimate friendſhip at Gondar, aſſured me that they were viſible to this day; and that they were of a kind whoſe uſe could not be miſtaken; that he himſelf had often viſited them, and was convinced the undertaking was very poſſible with ſuch hands, and in the circumſtances things then were. He told me likewiſe, that, in a written

written account which he had ſeen in Shoa, it was ſaid that this prince was not interrupted by death in his undertaking, but perſuaded by the monks, that if a greater quantity of water was let down into the dry kingdoms of Hadea, Mara, and Adel, increaſing in population every day, and even now, almoſt equal in power to Abyſſinia itſelf, theſe barren kingdoms would become the garden of the world; and ſuch a number of Saracens, diſlodged from Egypt by the firſt appearance of the Nile's failing, would fly thither: that they would not only withdraw thoſe countries from their obedience, but be ſtrong enough to over-run the whole kingdom of Abyſſinia. Upon this, as Amha Yaſous informed me, Lalibala gave over his firſt ſcheme, which was the famiſhing of Egypt; and that his next was employing the men in ſubterraneous churches; a uſeleſs expence, but more level to the underſtanding of common men than the former.

Don Roderigo de Lima, ambaſſador from the king of Portugal, in 1522, ſaw the remains of theſe vaſt works, and travelled in them ſeveral days, as we learn from Alvarez the chaplain and hiſtorian of that embaſſy *, which we ſhall take notice of in its proper place.

Lalibala was diſtinguiſhed both as a poet and an orator. The old fable, of a ſwarm of bees hanging to his lips in the cradle, is revived and applied to him as foretelling the ſweetneſs of his elocution.

To Lalibala ſucceeded Imeranha Chriſtos, remarkable for nothing but being the ſon of ſuch a father

* See Alvarez, his relation of this Embaſſy.

father as Lalibala, and father to such a son as Naacueto Laab; both of them distinguished for works very extraordinary, though very different in their kind. The first, that is those of the father we have already hinted at, consisting in great mechanical undertakings. The other was an operation of the mind, of still more difficult nature, a victory over ambition, the voluntary abdication of a crown to which he succeeded without imputation of any crime.

Tecla Haimanout, a monk and native of Abyssinia, had been ordained Abuna, and had founded the famous monastery of Debra Libanos in Shoa. He was at once celebrated for the sanctity of his life, the goodness of his understanding, and love to his country; and, by an extraordinary influence, obtained over the reigning king Naacueto Laab, he persuaded him, for conscience sake, to resign a crown, which (however it might be said with truth, that he received it from his father) could never be purged from the stain and crime of usurpation.

In all this time, the line of Solomon had been continued from Del Naad, who, we have seen, had escaped from the massacre of Damo, under Judith. Content with possessing the loyal province of Shoa, they continued their royal residence there, without having made one attempt, as far as history tells us, towards recovering their ancient kingdom.

RACE

RACE OF SOLOMON BANISHED, BUT REIGNING IN SHOA.

Del Naad,
Mahaber Wedem,
Igba Sion,
Tzenaf Araad,
Nagaſh Zaré,
Asfeha,
Jacob,
Bahar Segued,
Adamas Segued,
Icon Amlac.

Naacueto Laab, of the houſe of Zaguè, was, it ſeems a juſt and peaceable prince.

Under the mediation of Abuna Tecla Haimanout, a treaty was made between him and Icon Amlac conſiſting of four articles, all very extraordinary in their kind.

The firſt was, that Naacueto Laab, prince of the houſe of Zaguè, ſhould forthwith reſign the kingdom of Abyſſinia to Icon Amlac, reigning prince of the line of Solomon then in Shoa.

The ſecond that a portion of lands in Laſta ſhould be given to Naacuto Laab and his heirs in abſolute property, irrevocably and irredeemably; that he ſhould preſerve, as marks of ſovereignty, two ſilver kettle drums, or nagareets; that the points of the ſpears of his guard, the globes that ſurmounted his ſendeck, (that is the pole upon which the colours are carried), ſhould be ſilver, and that he ſhould ſit upon a gold ſtool, or chair, in form of that uſed by the Kings of Abyſſinia; and that both he

he and his deſcendents ſhould be abſolutely free from all homage, ſervices, taxes, or public burdens for ever, and ſtiled Kings of Zaguè, or the Laa king.

The third article was, That one third of the kingdom ſhould be appropriated and ceded abſolutely to the Abuna himſelf, for the maintenance of his own ſtate, and ſupport of the clergy, convents, and churches in the kingdom; and this became afterwards an æra, or epoch, in Abyſſinian hiſtory, called the æra of partition.

The fourth, and laſt article, provided, that no native Abyſſinian could thereafter be choſen Abuna, and this even tho' he was ordained at, and ſent from Cairo. In virtue of this treaty, concluded and ſolemnly ſworn to, Icon Amlac took poſſeſſion of his throne, and the other contracting parties of the proviſions reſpective allotted them.

The part of the treaty that ſhould appear moſt liable to be broken was that which erected a kingdom within a kingdom. However, it is one of the remarkable facts in the annals of this country, that the article between Icon Amlac and the houſe of Zaguè was obſerved for near 500 years; for it was made before the year 1300, and never was broken, but by the treacherous murder of the Zaguean prince by Allo Faſil in the unfortunate war of Begemder, in the reign of Joas 1768, the year before I arrived in Abyſſinia; neither has any Abuna native of Abyſſinia ever been known ſince that period. As for the exorbitant grant of one third of the kingdom to the Abuna, it has been in great meaſure

measure resumed, as we may naturally suppose, upon different pretences of misbehaviour, true or alleged by the king or his ministers, the first great invasion of it being in the subsequent reign of king Theodorus, who, far from losing popularity by this infraction, has been ever reckoned a model for sovereigns.

CHAP.

# BOOK III.

## ANNALS OF ABYSSINIA;

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL:

CONTAINING THE HISTORY OF THE ABYSSINIANS, FROM THE RESTORATION OF THE LINE OF SOLOMON TO THE DEATH OF SOCINIOS, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE ROMISH RELIGION.

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## ICON AMLAC.

From 1268 to 1283.

*Line of Solomon reſtored under this Prince—He continues the Royal Reſidence in Shoa—Tecla Haimanout dies—Reaſons for the Fabrication of the ſuppoſed Nicene Canon.*

ALTHOUGH the multiplicity of names aſſumed by the kings of Abyſſinia, and the confuſion occaſioned by this cuſtom, has more than once been complained of in the foregoing ſheets, we have here a prince that is an exception to this practice, otherwiſe almoſt general. Icon Amlac is the only name by which we know this firſt prince of the race of Solomon, reſtored now fully to his dominions, after a long exile his family had ſuffered by the treaſon of Judith. The ſignification of his name is, "Let him be made our ſovereign," and is appa-

rently that which he took upon his inauguration or acceſſion to the throne ; and his name of baptiſm, and bye-name or popular name given him, are both therefore loſt.

Although now reſtored to the complete poſſeſſion of his ancient dominions, he was too wiſe all at once to leave his dutiful kingdom of Shoa and return to Tigré. He continued to make Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, his ſeat of the empire, and there reigned fifteen years.

In the 14th year of the reign of this prince, his great benefactor, Abuna Tecla Haimanout, founder of the Order of Monks of Debra Libanos, and reſtorer of the Royal family, died at that monaſtery in great reputation and very advanced age. He was the laſt Abyſſinian ordained Abuna; and this ſufficiently ſhews the date of that canon I have already ſpoken of, falſely ſaid to be a canon of the council of Nicea.

Though Le Grande and ſome others have pretended to be in doubt at what time, and for what reaſon this canon could have been made, I think the reaſon very plain, which fixes it to the time of Tecla Haimanout, as well as ſhews it to be a forgery of the church of Alexandria, no doubt with the council and advice of this great ſtatefman Tecla Haimanout. Egypt was fallen under the dominion of the Saracens ; the Coptic patriarch, and all the Chriſtians of the church of Alexandria, were their ſlaves or ſervants ; but the Abyſſinians were free and independent, both in church and ſtate, and a mortal hatred had followed the conqueſt from variety of cauſes, of which the perſecution of the Chriſtians in Egypt was not one of the leaſt. As

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it was probable that theſe reaſons would increaſe daily, the conſequence which promiſed inevitably to follow was, that the Abyſſinians would not apply to Alexandria, or Cairo, for a metropolitan ſent by the Mahometans, but would chooſe a head of their own, and ſo become independent altogether of the chair of St. Mark. As they were cut off from the reſt of the world by ſeas and deſerts almoſt inacceſſible, as they wanted books, and were every day relaxing in diſcipline, total ignorance was likely to follow their ſeparation from their primitive church, and this could not end but in a relapſe into Paganiſm, or in their embracing the religion of Mahomet.

This prohibition of making any of their countrymen Abuna, ſecured them always a foreigner, and a man of foreign education and attachments, to fill the place of Abuna, and by this means aſſured the dependence of the Abyſſinians upon the patriarch of Alexandria. This is what I judge probable, for I have already invincibly ſhewn, that it is impoſſible this canon could be one of the firſt general Council; and its being in Arabic, and conceived in very barbarous terms, ſufficiently evinces that it was forged at this period.

## IGBA SION.

From 1283 to 1312.

*Quick Succeſſion of Princes—Memoirs of theſe Reigns deficient.*

TO Icon Amlac ſucceeded Igba Sion, and after him five other princes, his brothers, Bahar Segued, Tzenaf Segued, Jan Segued, Haſeb Araad, and Kedem Segued, all in five years. So quick a ſucceſſion in ſo few years ſeems to mark very unſettled times. Whether it was a civil war among themſelves that brought theſe reigns to ſo ſpeedy a concluſion, or whether it was that the Mooriſh ſtates in Adel had grown in power, and fought ſucceſsfully againſt them, we do not know. One thing only we are certain of, that no moleſtation was offered by the late royal family of Laſta, who continued in peace, and firm in the obſervation of their treaty. I therefore am inclined to think, that a civil war among the brothers was the occaſion of the quick ſucceſſion of ſo many princes; and that in the time when the kingdom was weakened by this calamity, the ſtates of Adel, grown rich and powerful, had improved the occaſion, and ſeized upon all that territory from Azab to Melinda, and cut off the Abyſſinians entirely from the ſea-coaſt, and from an opportunity of trading directly with India from the ports ſituated upon the ocean. And my reaſon is, that, in a reign which ſpeedily follows, we find the kingdom of Adel increaſed greatly in pow-

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er, and Mooriſh princes from Arabia eſtabliſhed in little principalities, exactly correſponding with the ſouthern limits of Abyſſinia, and placed between them and the ocean; and we ſee, at the ſame time, a rancour and hatred firmly rooted in the breaſts of both nations, one of the cauſes of which is conſtantly alleged by the Abyſſinian princes to be, that the Moors of Adel were anciently their ſubjects and vaſſals, had withdrawn themſelves from their allegiance, and owed their preſent independence to rebellion only.

To theſe princes ſucceeded Wedem Araad, their youngeſt brother, who reigned fifteen years, probably in peace, for in this ſtate we find the kingdom in the days of his ſucceſſor; but then it is ſuch a peace that we ſee it only wanted any ſort of provocation from one party to the other, for both to break out into very cruel, long, and bloody wars.

## ADMA SION.

From 1312 to 1342.

*Licentious beginning of this King's Reign—His rigorous Conduct with the Monks of Debra Libanos—His Mahometan Subjects rebel—Mara and Adel declare War—Are defeated in ſeveral Battles, and ſubmit.*

ADMA Sion ſucceeded his father, Wedem Araad, who was youngeſt brother of Icon Amlac, and came to the crown upon the death of his uncles. He is generally known by this his inaugura-

tion

tion name; his Chriſtian name was Guebra Maſcal. His reign began with a ſcene as diſgraceful to the name of Chriſtian as it was new in the annals of Ethiopia, and which promiſed a character very different from what this prince preſerved ever afterwards. He had for a time, it ſeems, privately loved a concubine of his father, but had now taken her to live with him publicly; and, not content with committing this ſort of inceſt, he, in a very little time after, had ſeduced his two ſiſters.

Tegulat * (the capital of Shoa) was then the royal reſidence; and near it the monaſtery of Debra Libanos, founded by Tecla Haimanout reſtorer of the line of Solomon. To this monaſtery many men, eminent for learning and religion, had retired from the ſcenes of war that had deſolated Paleſtine and Egypt. Among the number of theſe was one Honorius, a Monk of the firſt character for piety, who, ſince, has been canonized as a ſaint. Honorius thought it his duty firſt to admoniſh, and then publicly excommunicate the king for theſe crimes.

It ſhould ſeem that patience was as little among this prince's virtues as chaſtity, as he immediately ordered Honorius to be apprehended, ſtripped naked, and ſeverely whipped through every ſtreet of his capital. That ſame night the town took fire, and was entirely conſumed, and the clergy loſt no time to perſuade the people, that it was the blood of Honorius that turned to fire whenever it had dropt upon the ground, and ſo had burnt the city. The king, perhaps better informed, thought otherwiſe of this, and ſuppoſed the burning of his capital

* The city of Wolves, or Hyænas.

pital was owing to the Monks themſelves. He therefore baniſhed thoſe of Debra Libanos out of the province of Shoa. The mountain of Geſhen had been choſen for the priſon wherein to guard the princes of the male-line of the race of Solomon, after the maſſacre by Eſther *, upon the rock Damo in Tigré.

Geſhen is a very ſteep and high rock, in the kingdom of Amhara, adjoining to, and under the juriſdiction of Shoa. Hither the king ſent Philip the Itchegué, chief of the monaſtery of Debra Libanos, and he ſcattered the reſt through Dembea, Tigré, and Begemder, (whoſe inhabitants were moſtly Pagans and Jews), where they greatly propagated the knowledge of the Chriſtian religion.

This inſtance of ſeverity in the king had the effect to make all ranks of people return to their duty; and all talk of Honorius and his miracles was dropt. The town was rebuilt ſpeedily, more magnificently than ever, and Amda Sion found time to turn his thoughts to correct thoſe abuſes, to efface the unfavourable impreſſion which they had made upon the minds of his people at home, and which, beſides, had gained conſiderable ground abroad.

It has been before mentioned, and will be further inculcated in the courſe of this hiſtory as a fact, without the remembrance of which the military expeditions of Abyſſinia cannot be well underſtood, that two oppoſite ſeaſons prevail in countries ſeparated by a line almoſt imperceptible; that during

* She had ſeveral names, as I have before ſaid, *Judith* in Tigré, and in Amhara *Eſther*.

during our European winter months, that is, from October to March, the winter or rainy ſeaſon prevails on the coaſt of the ocean and Red Sea, but that theſe rains do not fall in our ſummer, (the rainy ſeaſon in Abyſſinia), which was the reaſon why Amda Sion ſaid to his mutinous troops, he would lead them to Adel or Auſſa, where it did not rain, as we ſhall preſently obſerve.

The different nations that dwell along the coaſt, both of the Red Sea and of the ocean, live in fixed huts or houſes. We ſhall begin at the northmoſt, or neareſt Atbara. The firſt is Ageeg, ſo named from a ſmall iſland on the coaſt, oppoſite to the mountains of the Habab, Agag, or Agaazi, the principal diſtrict of the noble or governing Shepherds, as is before fully explained, different in colour and hair from the Shepherds of the Thebaid living to the northward. Then follow the different tribes of theſe, Tora, Shiho, Taltal, Azimo, and Azabo, where the Red Sea turns eaſtward, towards the Straits, all woolly-headed, the primitive carriers of Saba, and the perfume and gold country. Then various nations inhabit along the ocean, all native blacks, remnants of the Cuſhite Troglodyte, but who do not change their habitations with the ſeaſons, but live within land in caves, and ſome of them now in houſes.

In Adel and Auſſa the inhabitants are tawny, and not black, and have long hair; they are called Gibbertis, which ſome French writers of voyages into this country ſay, mean Slaves, from Guebra, the Abyſſinian word for ſlave or ſervant. But as it would be very particular that a nation like theſe,

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ſo rich and ſo powerful, who have made themſelves independent of their ancient maſters the Abyſſinians, have wreſted ſo many provinces from them, and, from the difference of their faith, hold them in ſuch utter contempt, ſhould nevertheleſs be content to call themſelves their ſlaves, ſo nothing is more true, than that this name of Gibberti has a very different import. Jabber, in Arabic, the word from which it is derived, ſignifies the *faith*, or the *true faith*; and Gibberti conſequently means the *faithful*, or the *orthodox*, by which name of *honour* theſe Moors, inhabiting the low country of Abyſſinia, call each other, as being conſtant in their faith amidſt Chriſtians with whom they are at perpetual war.

There is no current coin in Abyſſinia. Gold is paid by weight; all the revenues are chiefly paid in kind, viz. oxen, ſheep, and honey, which are the greateſt neceſſaries of life. As for luxuries, they are obtained by a barter of gold, myrrh, coffee, elephants teeth, and a variety of other articles which are carried over to Arabia; and in exchange for theſe is brought back whatever is commiſſioned.

Every great man in Abyſſinia has one of theſe Gibbertis for his factor. The king has many, who are commonly the ſhrewdeſt and moſt intelligent of their profeſſion. Theſe were the firſt inhabitants of Abyſſinia, whom commerce connected with the Arabians on the other ſide of the Straits of Babelmandeb, with whom they intermarry, or with one another, which preſerves their colour and features, reſembling both the Abyſſinians and Arabians. In Arabia, they are under the protection of ſome of their own countrymen, who being ſold when young

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as ſlaves, are brought up in the Mahometan religion, and enjoy all the principal poſts under the Sherriffe of Mecca and the Arabian princes. Theſe are the people who at particular times have appeared in Europe, and who have been ſtraightway taken for, and treated as Ambaſſadors.

More ſouthward and weſtward are the kingdoms of Mara, Worgla, and Pagoma, ſmall principalities of fixed habitations by the ſea, at times free, at others dependent upon Adel; and, to the ſouth of theſe, in the ſame flat country, is Hadea, whoſe capital is Harar, and governed by a prince, who is a Gibberti likewiſe; and who, by marrying a Sherriffe, or female deſcendant of Mahomet, is now reckoned a Sherriffe or noble of Mahomet's family, diſtinguiſhed by his wearing habits, for the moſt part green, and above all a graſs-green turban, a mark of hatred to Chriſtianity.

The Gibbertis, then, are the princes and merchants of this country, converted to the Mahometan faith ſoon after the death of Mahomet, when the Baharnagaſh (as we have already ſtated) revolted from the empire of the Abyſſinians, in whoſe hands all the riches of the country are centered. The black inhabitants are only their ſubjects, hewers of wood and drawers of water, who ſerve them in their families at home, take care of their camels when employed in caravans abroad, and who make the principal part of their forces in the field.

But there are other inhabitants ſtill beſides theſe Gibbertis and native blacks, whom we muſt not confound with the indigenous of this country, how much ſoever they may reſemble them. The firſt of theſe

theſe are by the Portugueſe hiſtorians called *Moors*, who are merchants from the weſt of Africa. Many of theſe, expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Iſabella, fixed their reſidence here, and were afterwards joined by others of their Mooriſh brethren, either exiles from Spain, or inhabitants of Morocco, whom the deſire of commerce induced firſt to ſettle in Arabia, till the great oppreſſions that followed the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia, under Selim and Soliman, interrupted their trade, and ſcattered them here along the coaſt. Theſe are the Moors that Vaſques de Gama * met at Mombaza, Magadoxa, and Melinda; at all places, but the laſt of which, they endeavoured to betray him. Theſe alſo were the Moors that he found in India, having no profeſſion but trade, in every ſpecies of which they excelled.

The fourth ſort are Arabian merchants, who come over occaſionally to recover their debts, and renew correſpondences with the merchants of this country. Theſe are the richeſt of all, and are the bankers of the Gibbertis, who furniſh them funds and merchandiſe, with which they carry on a moſt lucrative and extenſive trade into the heart of Africa, through all the mountains of Abyſſinia to the weſtern ſea, and through countries which are inacceſſible to camels, where the aſs, the mule, and, in ſome places, oxen, are the only beaſts uſed in carriage.

There is a fifth ſort, almoſt below notice, unleſs it is for the miſchief they have conſtantly done their

* Conquetes de Portugais par Lafitau, vol. 1. liv. ii. p. 90. Id. ibid. p. 144.

their country; they are the Abyſſinian apoſtates from Chriſtianity, the moſt inveterate enemies it has, and who are employed chiefly as ſoldiers. While in that country they are not much eſteemed, though, when tranſported to India, they have conſtantly turned out men of confidence, and truſt, and the beſt troops thoſe eaſtern nations have.

There is a ſixth, ſtill leſs in number than even theſe, and not known on this Continent till a few years before. Theſe were the Turks who came from Greece and Syria, and who were under Selim, and Soliman his ſon, the inſtruments of the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia; ſmall garriſons of whom were every where left by the Turks in all the fortreſſes and conſiderable towns they conquered. They are an hereditary kind of militia, who, marrying each others daughters, or with the women of the country, continue from father to ſon to receive from Conſtantinople the ſame pay their forefathers had from Selim. Theſe, though degenerate in figure and manners into an exact reſemblance to the natives of the countries in which they ſince lived, do ſtill continue to maintain their ſuperiority by a conſtant ſkill and attention to fire-arms, which were, at the time of their firſt appearance here, little known or in uſe among either Abyſſinians or Arabians, and the means of firſt eſtabliſhing this preference.

It has been already obſerved, that the Mahometan Moors and Arabs poſſeſſed all the low country on the Indian Ocean, and oppoſite to Arabia Felix; and being, by their religion, obliged to go in pilgrimage to Mecca, as alſo by their ſole profeſſion which was trade, they became, by conſequence, the

the only carriers and directors of the commerce of Abyssinia. All the country to the east and north of Shoa was possessed and commanded chiefly by Mahometan merchants appointed by the king; and they had established a variety of marts or fairs from Ifat, all the way as far as Adel.

Adel and Mara were two of the most powerful kingdoms which lie on the Indian Ocean; and, being constantly supported by soldiers from Arabia, were the first to withdraw themselves from obedience to the king of Abyssinia, and seldom paid their tribute unless when the prince came to raise it there with an army. Ifat, Fatigar, and Dawaro, were indeed originally Christian provinces; but, in weak reigns, having been ceded to Moorish governors for sums of money, they, by degrees, renounced both their religion and allegiance.

From what has been observed, the reader will conceive, that where it is said the king, from his capital in Shoa, marched down into Dawaro, Hadea, or Adel, that he then descended from the highest mountains down to the flat country on the level with the sea. That this country, from Hadea to Dawaro, having been the seat of war for ages, was, partly by the soldier for the use of the camp, partly by the husbandman for the necessaries of life, cleared of wood, where the water stood constantly in pools throughout the year; and, being all composed of fat black earth, which the torrents bring down from the rainy country of Abyssinia, was sown with millet and different kinds of grain in the driest ground, while, nearer the mountains, they pastured numerous herds of cattle. Notwithstanding,

ing, however, the country was poſſeſſed of theſe advantages, the climate was intenſely hot, feveriſh, and unhealthy, and, for the moſt part, from theſe circumſtances, fatal to ſtrangers, and hated by the Abyſſinians.

Again, when it is ſaid that the king had marched to Samhar, it is meant that he had paſſed this fruitful country, and is come to that part of the zone, or belt, (neareſt the ſea) compoſed of gravel; which, though it enjoys neither the water nor the fruitfulneſs of the black earth, is in a great meaſure free from its attendant diſeaſes, and here the cities and towns are placed, while the crop, oxen, and cattle, are in the cultivated part near the mountains, which in the language of the country is called *Mazaga*, ſignifying *black mould*.

Laſtly, when he hears the army murmuring at being kept during the rainy ſeaſon in the Kolla below, he is to remember, that all was cool, pleaſant, and ſafe in Upper Abyſſinia. The ſoldiers, therefore, languiſhed for the enjoyment of their own families, without any other occupation but merriment, feſtivity, and every ſpecies of gratification that wine, and the free and uncontrolled ſociety of the female-ſex, could produce.

Having now ſufficiently explained and deſcribed the various names and inhabitants, the ſituation, ſoil, and climate of thoſe provinces about to be the theatre of the war, I ſhall proceed to declare the occaſion of it, which was nothing more than the fruit of thoſe prejudices which, I have already ſaid, the looſe behaviour of the king in the beginning of his reign had produced among his neighbours,

and

and the calamities which had enfeebled the kingdom in the preceding reigns.

It happened that one of thoſe Mooriſh factors, whom I have already deſcribed, having in charge the commercial intereſts of the king, had been aſſaſſinated and robbed in the province of Ifat, when the King was buſied with Honorius and his Monks. Without complaining or expoſtulating, he ſuddenly aſſembled his troops, having ordered them to rendezvous at Shugura upon the frontiers, and, to ſhew his impatience for revenge, with ſeven * horſemen he fell upon the neareſt Mahometan ſettlements, who were perfectly ſecure, and put all he found to the ſword without exception. Then placing himſelf at the head of his army, he marched, by a long day's journey, ſtraight to Ifat, burning Hungura, Jadai, Kubat, Fadiſe, Caliſe, and Argai, towns that lye in the way, full of all ſorts of valuable merchandiſe, and, finding no where a force aſſembled to oppoſe him, he divided his army into ſmall detachments, ſending them different ways with orders to lay the whole countries, where they came, waſte with fire and ſword, while he himſelf remained in the camp to guard the ſpoil, the women, and the baggage.

The Moors, aſtoniſhed at this torrent of deſolation, which ſo ſuddenly had broken out under a prince whom they had conſidered as immerſed in pleaſure, flew all to arms; and being informed that the king was alone, and ſcarcely had ſoldiers to

* It has been imagined that this number ſhould be increaſed to ſeventy, but I have followed the text; there would be little difference in the raſhneſs of the action.

to guard his camp, they aſſembled in numbers under the command of Hak-eddin, governor of Ifat, who had before plundered and murdered the king's ſervant. They then determined to attack Amda Sion early in the morning, but luckily two of his detachments had returned to the camp to his aſſiſtance, and joined him the very night before.

It was ſcarcely day when the Moors preſented themſelves; but, far from ſurpriſing the Abyſſinians buried in ſleep, they found the king with his army ranged in battle, who, without giving them time to recover from their ſurpriſe, attacked them in perſon with great fury; and ſingling out Derdar, brother to Hak-eddin, animating his men before the ranks, he ſtruck him ſo violently with his lance that he fell dead among his horſe's feet, in the ſight of both armies; whilſt the Abyſſinian troops preſſing every where briſkly forward, the Moors took to flight, and were purſued with great ſlaughter into the woods and faſtneſſes.

After this victory, the king ordered his troops to build huts for themſelves, at leaſt ſuch as could not find houſes ready built. He ordered, likewiſe, a great tract of land contiguous to be plowed and ſown, meaning to intimate, that his intention was to ſtay there with his army all the rainy reaſon.

The Mahometans, from this meaſure, if it ſhould be carried into execution, ſaw nothing but total extirpation before their eyes; they, therefore, with one conſent, ſubmitted to the tribute impoſed upon them; and the king having removed Hak-eddin, placed his brother Saber-eddin in his ſtead, and the

rainy

rainy ſeaſon being now begun, diſmiſſed his army, and returned to Tegulat in Shoa.

Though the perſonal gallantry of the king was a quality ſufficient of itſelf to make him a favourite of the ſoldiers, his liberality was not leſs; all the plunder got by his troops in the field was faithfully divided among thoſe who had fought for him; nor did he ever pretend to a ſhare himſelf, unleſs on occaſions when he was engaged in perſon, and then he ſhared upon an equal footing with his principal officers.

When returned to the capital, he ſhewed the ſame diſintereſtedneſs and generoſity which he had done in the field, and he diſtributed all he had won for his ſhare among the great men, whom the neceſſary duties of government had obliged to remain at home, as alſo among the poor, and prieſts for the maintenance of churches; and, as well by this, as by his zeal and activity againſt the enemies of Chriſtianity, he became the greateſt favourite of all ranks of the clergy, notwithſtanding the unpromiſing appearances at the beginning of his reign.

The rainy ſeaſon in Abyſſinia generally puts an end to the active part of war, as every one retires then to towns and villages to ſcreen themſelves from the inclemency of the climate, deluged now with daily rain. The ſoldier, the huſbandman, and, above all, the women, dedicate this ſeaſon to continued feſtivity and riot. Theſe villages and towns are always placed upon the higheſt mountains. The valleys that intervene are ſoon divided by large and rapid torrents. Every hollow footpath becomes a ſtream, and the valleys between

the hills become ſo miry as not to bear horſe; and the waters, both deep and violent, are too apt to ſhift their direction to ſuffer any one on foot to paſs ſafely. All this ſeaſon, and this alone, people ſleep in their houſes in ſafety; their lances and ſhields are hung up on the ſides of their hall, and their ſaddles and bridles taken off their horſes; for in Abyſſinia, at other times, the horſes are always bridled, and are accuſtomed to eat and drink with this incumbrance. It is not, indeed, the ſame ſort of bridle they uſe in the field, but a ſmall bit of iron like our hunting-bridles, on purpoſe merely to preſerve them in this habit. The court, and the principal officers of government, retire to the capital, and there adminiſter juſtice, make alliances, and prepare the neceſſary funds and armaments, which the preſent exigencies of the ſtate require on the return of fair weather.

Amda Sion was no ſooner returned to Tegulat, than the Moors again entered into a conſpiracy againſt him. The principal were Amano king of Hadea, Saber-eddin, whom the king had made governor of Fatigar, and privately, without any open declaration, Gimmel-eddin governor in Dawaro. But this conſpiracy, could not be hid from a prince of Amda Sion's vigilance and penetration. He concealed, however, any knowledge of the matter, leſt it ſhould urge the Moors to commence hoſtilities too early. He continued, therefore, with diligence, and without oſtentation of any particular deſign, to make the ordinary preparations to take the field on the approaching ſeaſon. This, however, did not impoſe upon the enemy. Whether from intel-

ligence,

ligence, or impatience of being longer inactive, Saber-eddin began the firſt hoſtilities, by ſurpriſing ſome Chriſtian villages, and plundering and ſetting fire to the churches before the rains had yet entirely ceaſed.

Thoſe that have written accounts of Abyſſinia ſeem to agree in extolling the people of that country for giving no belief to the exiſtence or reality of witchcraft or ſorcery. Why they have fixed on this particular nation is hard to determine. But, as for me, I have no doubt in aſſerting, that there is not a barbarous or ignorant people that I ever knew of which this can be truly ſaid; but certainly it never was leſs true than when ſaid of Abyſſinians. There is ſcarce a monk in any lonely monaſtery, (ſuch as thoſe in the hot and unwholeſome valley of Waldubba), not a hermit of the many upon the mountains, not an old prieſt who has lived any time ſequeſtered from ſociety, that does not pretend to poſſeſs charms offenſive and defenſive, and ſeveral methods by which he can, at will, look into futurity. The Moors are all, to a man, perſuaded of this: their arms and necks are loaded with amulets againſt witchcraft. Their women are believed to have all the miſchievous powers of faſcination; and both ſexes a hundred ſecrets of divination. The Falaſha are addicted to this in ſtill a greater degree, if poſſible. It is always believed by every individual Abyſſinian, that the number of hyænas the ſmell of carrion brings into the city of Gondar every night, are the Falaſha from the neighbouring mountains, transformed by the effect and for the purpoſes of inchantment. Even the Galla, a bar-

barous and ſtranger nation, hoſtile to the Abyſſinians, and differing in language and religion, ſtill agree with them in a hearty belief of the poſſibility of practiſing witchcraft, ſo as to occaſion ſickneſs and death at a very great diſtance, to blaſt the harveſts, poiſon the waters, and render people incapable of propagating their ſpecies.

Amano, king of Hadea, had one of theſe conjurers, who, by his knowledge of futurity, was famous among all the Mahometans of the low country. The king of Hadea himſelf had gone no further than to determine to rebel; but whether he was to go up to fight with Amda Sion in Shoa, or whether greater ſucceſs would attend his expecting him in Hadea, this was thought a doubt wholly within the province of the conjurer, who aſſured Amano, his maſter, that if he did remain below, and wait for Amda Sion in Hadea, that prince would come down to him and in one battle loſe his kingdom and his life.

The king, whoſe principal view was to prevent the conjunction of the confederates, and, if poſſible, to fight them ſeparately, did not ſtay till his whole army was aſſembled, but, as ſoon as he got together a body of troops ſufficient to make head againſt any one of the rebels, he ſent that body immediately on the ſervice it was deſtined for, in order to diſappoint the general combination.

A large number of horſe and foot (whoſe poſt was in the van of the royal army when the king marched at the head of it) was the firſt ready, and, without delay, was ſent againſt Amano into Hadea, under the command of the general of the cavalry.

This

This officer executed the ſervice on which he was ſent with the greateſt diligence poſſible, having the beſt horſes, and ſtrongeſt and moſt active men in the army; by long marches, he came upon the king of Hadea, ſurpriſed him before his troops were all aſſembled, gave him an entire defeat, and made him priſoner. However ill the conjurer had provided for the king's ſafety, he ſeems to have been more attentive to his own; great ſearch was made for him by order of Amda Sion, but he was not to be found, having very early, upon the firſt ſight of the king's troops, fled and hid himſelf in Ifat.

The next detachment was ſent againſt Saber-eddin in Fatigar. The governor of Amhara commanded this, with orders to lay the whole country waſte, and by all means provoke Saber-eddin to riſk a battle, either before or after the junction of the troops which were to march thither from Hadea. But when the king was thus buſy with the Moors, news were brought him that the Falaſha had rebelled, and were in arms, in very great numbers. The king ordered Tzaga Chriſtos, governor of Begemder, to aſſemble his troops with thoſe of Gondar, Sacalta, and Damot, and march againſt theſe rebels before they had time to ruin the country; and having thus made proviſion againſt all his enemies, Amda Sion proceeded with the remainder of his army to Dawaro.

Hydar was governor in this province for the king, who, though he ſhewed outwardly every appearance of duty and fidelity, was, notwithſtanding, deep in the conſpiracy with Saber-eddin, and had cloſe correſpondence with the king of Adel, whoſe

whoſe capital, Auſſa, was not at a great diſtance from him.

The king kept his Eaſter at Gaza, immediately upon the verge of the deſert; and, being willing to accuſtom his troops to action and hardſhip, he left his tents and baggage behind with the army; and ſecretly taking with him but twenty-ſix horſemen, he made an incurſion upon Samhar, deſtroying all before him, and ſtaying all night, tho' he had no proviſions, in the middle of his enemies, without ſo much as lying down to ſleep, ſlacking his belt, or taking off any part of his armour.

The king was no ſooner gone than the army miſſed him, and was all in the greateſt uproar. But having finiſhed his expedition, he joined them in the morning, and encamped again with them. On his arrival, he found waiting for him a meſſenger from Tzaga Chriſtos, with accounts that he had fought ſucceſsfully with the Falaſha, entirely defeated them, ſlain many, and forced the reſt to hide themſelves in their inacceſſible mountains. Immediately after this intelligence, Tzaga Chriſtos, with his victorious army, joined the king alſo.

Theſe good tidings were followed by others equally proſperous from Hadea and Fatigar. They were, that the king's army in thoſe parts had forced Saber-eddin to a battle, and beaten him, taken and plundered his houſe, and brought his wife and children priſoners; and that the troops had found that country full of merchandiſe and riches of all kinds; that they were already laden and incumbered with the quantity to ſuch a degree, that they were all ſpeaking of diſbanding and retiring to their houſes

with

with riches ſufficient for the reſt of their lives, although a great part of the country remained as yet untouched, and, therefore, it was requeſted of the king in all diligence to enter it on his ſide alſo, and march ſouthward till both armies met. Immediately upon this meſſage, the king, having refreſhed his troops, and informed them of the good proſpects that were before them, decamped with his whole army, and entered the province of Ifat.

When Saber-eddin ſaw the king's forces were joined, that he had no allies, and that it was, in the ſituation of his army, equally dangerous to ſtay or to fly, he took a reſolution of ſubmitting himſelf to the king's mercy; but, firſt, he endeavoured to ſoften his anger, and obtain ſome aſſurances through the mediation of the queen. The king, however, having publicly reproved the queen for offering to intermeddle in ſuch matters, and growing more violent and inflexible upon this application, there remained no alternative but that of ſurrendering himſelf at diſcretion. Whereupon Saber-eddin threw himſelf at the king's feet. The ſoldiers and by-ſtanders, far from being moved at ſuch a ſight, with one voice earneſtly beſought the king, that the murderer of ſo many prieſts, and the profaner and deſtroyer of ſo many Chriſtian churches, ſhould inſtantly meet the death his crimes had merited. The king, however, whoſe mercy ſeems to have been equal to his bravery, after having reproved him with great aſperity, and upbraided him with his cruelty, preſumption, and ingratitude, ordered him only to be put in irons, and committed to a cloſe priſon. At the ſame time, he

diſplaced

diſplaced Hydar, governor of the province of Dawaro, of whoſe treaſon he had been long informed; and he inveſted Gimmel-eddin, Saber-eddin's brother, with the government of the Mahometan provinces, who, as he pretended, had not been preſent at the beginning of the war, but had preſerved his allegiance to the king, and diſſuaded his brother from the rebellion.

While the king was thus ſettling the government of the rebellious provinces, he received intelligence that the kings of Adel and Mara had reſolved to march after him into Shoa when he returned, and give him battle.

At this time the king was encamped on the river Hawaſh, at the head of the whole army, now united. This news of the hoſtile intentions of the kings of Adel and Mara, ſo exaſperated him, that he determined to enlarge his ſcheme of vengeance beyond the limits he had firſt preſcribed to it. With this view, he called the principal officers of his army together, while he himſelf ſtood upon an eminence, the ſoldiers ſurrounding him on all ſides. Near him, on the ſame eminence, was a monk, noted for his holineſs, in the habit in which he celebrated divine ſervice. The king, in a long ſpeech pronounced with unuſual vehemence, deſcribed the many offences committed againſt him by the Mahometan ſtates on the coaſt. The ringleaders of theſe commotions, he declared, were the kings of Adel and Mara. He enumerated various inſtances of cruelty, of murder, and ſacrilege, of which they had been guilty; the number of prieſts that they had ſlain, the churches that they had burned, and

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the Chriſtian women and children that they had carried into ſlavery, which was now become a commerce, and a great motive of war. They, and they only, had ſtirred up his Mahometan ſubjects to infeſt the frontiers both in peace and war. He ſaid, that conſidering the immenſe booty which had been taken, it might ſeem that avarice was the motive of his being now in arms, but this, for his own part, he totally diſclaimed. He neither had nor would apply the ſmalleſt portion of the plunder to his own uſe, but conſidered it as unlawful, as being purchaſed with the blood and liberty of his ſubjects and brethren, the meaneſt of whom he valued more than the blood and riches of all the infidels in Adel. He, therefore, called them together to be witneſſes that he dedicated himſelf a ſoldier to Jeſus Chriſt; and he did now ſwear upon the holy euchariſt, that, though but twenty of his army ſhould join with him, he would not turn his back upon Adel or Mara, till he had either forced them to tribute and ſubmiſſion, or extirpated them, and annihilated their religion.

He then entered the tent-door, and took the ſacrament from the hands of the monk, in preſence of the whole army. All the principal officers did the ſame, and every individual of the army, with repeated ſhouts, declared, that they acceded to, and were bound by, the oath the king then had made. A violent fury ſpread in this inſtant through the whole army; they conſidered that part of the king's ſpeech as a reproach, which mentioned the ſpoils they had taken to have been bought by the blood of Chriſtians, their brethren. Every hand laid hold

of

of a torch, and, whether the plunder was his own or his fellow-ſoldiers, each man ſet fire, without interruption, to the merchandiſe that was next him. The whole riches of Ifat and Hadea, Fatigar and Dawaro, were conſumed in an inſtant by theſe fanatics, who, ſatisfied now that they were purged from the impurity which the king had attributed to their plunder, returned poor to their ſtandards, but convinced in their own conſcience of having now, by their ſacrament and expiation, become the ſoldiers of Chriſt, they thirſted no longer after any thing but the blood of the inhabitants of Adel and Maria.

Soon after, Amda Sion heard that the Moors had attacked his army in Ifat two ſeveral nights, and that his troops had ſuffered greatly, and with difficulty been able to maintain themſelves in their camp. The king was then upon his march when he heard theſe diſagreeable news; he haſtened, therefore, immediately to their relief, and encamped at night in an advantageous poſt, ſhort of his main army, with a view of taking advantage of this ſituation, if the Moors, as he expected, renewed their attack that night for the third time.

The Abyſſinians, to a man, are fearful of the night, unwilling to travel, and, above all, to fight in that ſeaſon, when they imagine the world is in poſſeſſion of certain genii, averſe to intercourſe with men, and very vindictive, if even by accident they are ruffled or put out of their way by their interference. This, indeed, is carried to ſo great a height, that no man will venture to throw water out of a baſon upon the ground, for fear that, in ever

ever ſo ſmall a ſpace the water ſhould have to fall, the dignity of ſome elf, or fairy, might be violated. The Moors have none of theſe apprehenſions, and are accuſtomed in the way of trade to travel at all hours, ſometimes from neceſſity, but often from choice, to avoid the heat. They laugh, moreover, at the ſuperſtitions of the Abyſſinians, and not unfrequently avail themſelves of them. A verſe of the Koran, ſewed up in leather, and tied round their neck or their arms, ſecures them from all theſe incorporeal enemies; and, from this known advantage, if other circumſtances are favourable, they never fail to fight the Abyſſinians at or before the dawn of the morning, for in this country there is no twilight.

The Moors did not, in this inſtance, diſappoint the king's expectation; as they, with all poſſible ſecrecy, marched to the attack of the camp, while the king, having refreſhed his troops, put himſelf in motion to intercept them; and they were now arrived, and engaged in ſeveral places with very great vigour. The camp was in apparent danger, though vigorouſly defended. At this moment the king, with his freſh troops, fell violently upon their rear; and, it being known to the Moors that this was the king, they withdrew their army with all poſſible ſpeed, carrying with them a very conſiderable booty.

The ſucceſs which had followed theſe night expeditions, above all, the ſmall loſs that had attended the purſuit, even after they were defeated, from the perfect knowledge they had of the country, inſpired them with a reſolution to avoid pitched battles, but

to diſtreſs and haraſs the king's army every night. They accordingly brought their camp nearer than uſual to the king's quarters. This began to be felt by the army, which was prevented from foraging at a great diſtance; but proviſions could not be diſpenſed with. The king, therefore, detached a large body of horſe and foot that had not been engaged or fatigued. The greateſt part of the foot he ordered to return with the cattle they ſhould have taken, but the horſe, with each a foot-ſoldier behind him, he directed to take poſt in a wood near a pool of water, where the Mooriſh troops, after an aſſault in the night, retired, and took refreſhments and ſleep by the time the ſun began to be hot. The Moors again appeared in the night, attacked the camp in ſeveral places, and alarmed the whole army; but, by the bravery and vigour of the king, who every where animated his troops by his own example, they were obliged to retreat a little before morning, more fatigued, and more roughly handled, than they had hitherto been in any ſuch expedition.

The king, as if equally tired, followed them no further than the precincts of his camp; and the Moors, ſcarcely comforted by this forbearance after ſo great a loſs, retreated to receive ſuccour of freſh troops as uſual, and enjoy their repoſe in the neighbourhood of ſhade and water. They had, however, ſcarce thrown aſide their arms, diſpoſed of their wounded in proper places, and begun to aſſuage their thirſt after the toils of the aſſault, when the Abyſſinian horſe, breaking through the covert, came ſwiftly upon them, unable either to fight or

to

to fly, and the whole body of them was cut to pieces without one man escaping.

The king, upon return of his troops, began to consider, and, by combining various circumstances in his mind, to suspect strongly, that, from the Moors attacking him, as they had for some time lately done, always in the most unfavourable circumstances, there must be some intelligence between his camp and that of the enemy. Upon examining more particularly into the grounds of this suspicion, three men of Harar (who had long attended the army as spies) were discovered, and being convicted, were carried out, and their heads cut off at the entrance of the camp; after which the king, who now found himself without an enemy in these parts, struck his tents, and returned to Gaza in Dawaro.

This movement of Amda Sion's had more the appearance of opening a campaign than the closing of one, and occasioned great discontent among the soldiers, who had done their business, and were without an enemy, just at that time that the rains fall so heavy, and the country becomes so unwholesome as to make it unadvisable to keep the field. They, therefore, remonstrated by their officers to the king, that they must return to their houses for the several months of winter which were to follow; and that, after the fatigues, dangers, and hardships they had undergone for so many months, to persist in staying longer at such a season in this country was equal to the condemning them to death.

Gimmel-eddin, moreover, the new-appointed governor, insisted with Adma Sion, that he was able enough

enough himſelf to keep all the tributary provinces in peace, and true allegiance to the king; but if, on the contrary, the king choſe to eat them up with a large army living conſtantly among them, as well as upon every pretence laying them waſte with the ſword in the manner he was now doing, he could not be anſwerable for, nor did he believe they would be able to pay him, the tribute he expected from them. But the king, who ſaw the motives both of his officers and of the Mooriſh governor, continued firm in his reſolutions. He ſharply reproved both Gimmel-eddin and his army for their want of diſcipline, and deſire of idleneſs, and ordered the officers to acquaint their men, that, if they were afraid of rains, he would carry them to *Adel*, where there were *none*; that, for his part, he made a reſolution which he would keep moſt ſteadily, never to leave his camp and the field while there was one village in his own dominions that did not acknowledge him for its ſovereign.

Accordingly on the 13th day of June 1316, immediately after this declaration, he ſtruck his tents, and marched into Samhar, to diſappoint, if poſſible, the confederacy that ſome of the principal Mooriſh ſtates had entered into againſt him, which were agreed, one by one, to haraſs his camp by night, and, after having obliged him to retreat to Shoa in diſorder, to give him battle there before he had time to refreſh his troops. The authors of this conſpiracy were ſeven in number, Adel Mara, Tico, Agwama, Bakla *, Murgar, and Gabula, and they had

* A tribe of the Shepherds; all the reſt, but the two firſt, unknown in Abyſſinia at this day.

had already collected a conſiderable army. The king, who ſaw they perſiſted in their nightly attacks, rode out, thinly accompanied, to chooſe a poſt for an encampment that was to give him the greateſt advantage over his enemy; and, whilſt thus occupied, he was ſuddenly ſurrounded by a body of troops of Adel lying in Ambuſh for him. A ſoldier (in appearance an Abyſſinian) came ſo cloſe to the king as to ſtrike him with his ſword on the back with ſuch violence that it cut his belt in two, and, having wounded him thro' his armour, was ready to repeat the blow, when the king pierced him through the forehead with his lance, upon which his party fled.

But the Moors, for five ſucceſſive nights, did not fail in their attempts upon his camp, which wearied and greatly contributed to diſcontent his men; and the more ſo, becauſe the enemy declined coming to any general engagement, though the king frequently offered it to them. Amda Sion, therefore, decamped the 28th of June, and, leaving this diſadvantageous ſtation, advanced a day's march nearer Mara, pointing, as it were, to the very center of that kingdom. But here, again, he was ſtopt by the diſcontent of his ſoldiers, who abſolutely refuſed to go farther or ſpend the whole ſeaſon in arms, in this inclement climate, while the reſt of his ſubjects, in full enjoyment of health and plenty, were rioting at home.

This diſpoſition of his army was no ſooner known to the king than he called the principal officers of them togther, and, planting himſelf on a riſing ground, he began to harangue his ſoldiers with ſo much eloquence and force of reaſoning, that they who before

fore had only learned to admire their king as a ſoldier, were obliged to confeſs that, as an orator, he as much excelled every man in his ſtate, as he did the loweſt man of his kingdom in dignity. He put his ſoldiers in mind, " that this was not a com-
" mon expedition, like thoſe of his predeceſſors,
" marching through the country for the purpoſe of
" levying their revenue; that the intention of the
" preſent war was to avenge the blood of ſo many
" innocent Chriſtians ſlain in ſecurity and full peace,
" from no provocation but hatred of their religion:
" that they were inſtruments in the hand of God
" to revenge the death of ſo many prieſts and
" monks who had been wantonly offered as ſacri-
" fices upon their own altars: that they were not
" a common army, but one confederated upon
" oath, having ſworn upon the ſacrament, at the
" paſſage of the river Hawaſh, that they would not
" return into Abyſſinia till they had beat down and
" ruined the ſtrength of the Mahometans in thoſe
" kingdoms; ſo that now, when every thing had
" ſucceeded to their wiſhes, when every Mahome-
" tan army had been defeated as ſoon as it preſented
" itſelf, and the whole country lay open to the
" chaſtiſements they pleaſed to inflict, to talk of a
" retreat or forbearance was to make a mockery at
" once of their oath, and the motive of their expe-
" dition. He ſhewed, by invincible reaſonings,
" the great hardſhips and danger that would attend
" his retreat through a country already waſted and
" unable to maintain his army; what an alarm it
" would occaſion in Shoa, to find him returning
" with an enemy at his heels, following him to his

" very

" very capital; that ſuch, however, muſt be the " conſequence; for it was plain, that, though the " enemy declined fighting, yet there was no poſſi- " bility of hindering them from following him ſo " near as to give his retreat every appearance of " flight, and to bring an expedition, begun with " ſucceſs, to an ignominious and a fatal end.

" He upbraided them with his own example, that " early their prophets had foretold he was a prince " of luxury and eaſe, which, in the main he did " not deny, but confeſſed that he was ſo; and that " they all ſhould have an attachment to their plea- " ſures and enjoyments, he thought but reaſonable. " He deſired, however, in this, they would do as " much as he did, and only ſuſpend their love of " eaſe and reſt as long as their duty to God, to " their country, and their murdered brethren, " required; for, till theſe duties were fulfilled, eaſe " and enjoyment to a Chriſtian, and eſpecially to " them bound by oath to accompliſh a certain pur- " poſe, was, in his eyes, little ſhort of apoſtacy." A loud acclamation now followed from the whole army. They declared again, that they renewed their ſacrament taken at the paſſage of the Hawaſh, that they were Chriſt's ſoldiers, and would follow their ſovereign unto death.

Though the great perſonal merit of the king, and the grace, force, and dignity with which he ſpoke, had, of themſelves, produced a very ſudden change in the mind of the ſoldiers, yet, to the increaſe of this good diſpoſition it had very much contributed, that a monk, of great holineſs and auſterity of manners, living in a cell on the point of a ſteep rock,

had come down from Shoa to the camp, declaring that he had found it written in the Revelation of St. John, that this year the religion of Mahomet was to be utterly extirpated throughout the world. Full of this idea, on the feaſt of Ras Werk, in the month of July, the army paſſed the Yaſs, a large river of the kingdom of Mara, and encamped there. The troops were alarmed, the night after their arrival, by a piece of intelligence which proved a falſehood.

A woman, whoſe father had been a Chriſtian, ſaid, that ſhe had very lately left the Mooriſh camp; that the enemy were at no great diſtance, and only waited a night of ſtorm and rain to make a general attack upon the king's army; and the clouds threatening then a night of foul weather, it was not doubted but the engagement was thereupon immediately to follow. It blew, then ſo violent a ſtorm, that the king's tent, and moſt of thoſe in camp, were thrown down, and the ſoldiers were in very great confuſion, imagining, every moment the Moors ready to fall on them. But whether the ſtory was a falſehood, or the ſtorm too great for the Moors to venture out, nothing happened that night, nor, indeed, during their ſtay in that ſtation.

At this time a number of prieſts and others came out of curioſity to ſee their king making conqueſts of provinces and people till then unknown to them even by name; ſeveral large detachments of freſh troops from Abyſſinia alſo arrived, and joined the army. Upon this, Amda Sion advanced a day's journey farther into Mara, and took a ſtrong poſt, reſolving to maintain himſelf there, and, by detachments,

ments, lay the whole country desolate. This place is called *Dassi*. There was neither river, however, nor spring near it, but only water procured by digging in the sand, being what comes down from the sides of the mountains in the rainy season, and, having filtered through the whole loose earth, has reached the sand and gravel, where it stagnates, or finds slowly its level to the sea. Here the king was taken dangerously ill with the fever of the Kolla.

The altercations between Amda Sion and his soldiers, and the resolutions taken in consequence of these, were faithfully carried to the king of Adel. The march of the king forward at such a season of the year, the slow pace with which he advanced towards the very heart of the country, the care he took of providing all necessaries for his army, and his reinforcing it at such a season, all shewed this was no partial, sudden incursion, but that it was meant as a decisive blow, fatal to the independence of these petty sovereigns and states. To this it may be added, that Gimmel-eddin, whom the king had released from prison, and set over the Moorish provinces of Abyssinia, conveyed to them, in the most direct manner, that such were the king's purposes. He told them, moreover, this march into their country was not either to increase their tribute, or for the sake of plunder, or to force them to be his subjects; that Amda Sion's main design was against their religion, which he and his soldiers had vowed they were to destroy; that it was not their time to think of peace or tribute upon any terms; for, were they even to sell their wives and children, the price would not be accepted, unless

they forſook the religion of their fathers, and embraced Chriſtianity. He further added, that *his* reſolution was already taken, that he would die firm in the faith, a good Mahometan, as he had lived; not tamely, however, but in the middle of his enemies; and that he was now making every ſort of preparation to reſiſt to the lateſt breath.

No ſooner was this intelligence from Gimmel-eddin publiſhed, than a kind of frenzy ſeized the people of Adel; they ran tumultuouſly to arms, and, with ſhrieks and adjurations, demanded to be led immediately againſt the Abyſſinians, for they no longer deſired to live upon ſuch terms.

There was among the leading men of the Moors one Saleh, chief of a ſmall diſtrict called Caſſi, by birth a Sherriffe, *i. e.* one of the race of Mahomet, and who, to the nobility of his birth, joined the holineſs of his character. He was *Imam*, as it is called, or *high prieſt* of the Moors, and, for both theſe reaſons, held in the greateſt eſtimation among them. This man undertook, by his perſonal influence, to unite all the Mooriſh ſtates in a common league. For it is to be obſerved, that, though religion was very powerful in uniting theſe Moors againſt the Chriſtians, yet the love of gain, and jealouſies of commerce, perpetually kept a party alive that favoured the king for their own intereſt, in the very heart of the Mooriſh confederacies and councils. To overcome this was the object of Saleh, and he ſucceeded beyond expectation, as ſixteen kings brought 40,000 men into the field under their ſeveral leaders; but the chief command was given to the king of Adel.

I muſt

I muſt put the reader in mind that I am tranſlating an Abyſſinian hiſtorian. Theſe, then, whom this chronicle ſtiles Kings, muſt be conſidered as being only hereditary and independent chiefs, not tributary to Abyſſinia. Their names are Adel, Mara, Bakla, Haggara, Fadiſe, Gadai, Nagal, Zuba, Harlar, Hobal, Hangila, Tarſhiſh, Ain, Ilbiro, Zeyla, and Eſtè. Now, when we conſider, that theſe ſixteen kings brought only 40,000 men, and that they were commanded under theſe ſixteen by 2712 leaders, or governors or diſtricts, all which are ſet down by name, we muſt have a very contemptible opinion of the extent and populouſneſs of theſe newly-erected kingdoms.

It appears to me unneceſſary to repeat, after my hiſtorian, the names of theſe villages, which probably do not now exiſt, and are, perhaps, utterly unknown. I ſhall only obſerve in paſſing, that here we find Tarſhis, or Tarſhiſh, a kingdom on the coaſt of the ocean, directly in the way to Sofala; another ſtrong preſumption that Sofala and Ophir were the ſame, and that this is Tarſhiſh where Solomon's fleet ſtopt when going to Ophir.

Amda Sion's fever hindering him to march forward, and being unwilling to riſk a battle where he was not able himſelf to command, he continued cloſe in his ſtrong camp at Daſſi, waiting his recovery; but, in the mean time, he made conſiderable detachments on all ſides to lay the country waſte around him, till he ſhould be able to advance farther into it.

Of all the royal army, as it ſtood upon the eſtabliſhment, the king had only with him the troops from

from the provinces of Amhara, Shoa, Gojam, and Damot, and theſe were what compoſed the rear, when the whole, called the royal army, was aſſembled; all his troops were regularly paid, well armed, and cloathed, and were not only provided with every neceſſary, but were become exceedingly rich, and, therefore, the more careleſs of diſcipline, and difficult to manage, on account of the repeated conqueſts that had followed one another ever ſince the king had croſſed the river Hawaſh, and come into the deſert kingdom of Mara, unfruitful in its ſoil, but flouriſhing by trade, and rich in India commodities. The ſoldiers had here ſo loaded themſelves with ſpoils and merchandiſe, that they began rather to think of returning home, and enjoying what they had got, than of puſhing their conqueſts ſtill farther to the deſtruction of Adel and Mara. The putrid ſtate of the water, in this ſultry and unwholeſome climate, had afflicted the king with the fever of the country, which he though, not by any means to remedy or prevent. No conſideration could keep him from expoſing himſelf to the moſt violent ſun-beams, and to the more noxious vapours of the night; and it was now the ſeventh day his fever had been increaſing, although he neither ate nor drank. The army expecting, from the king's illneſs, a ſpeedy order to return, converſed of nothing elſe within their camp, with that kind of ſecurity as if they had already received orders to return home.

The Mahometan army had aſſembled, and no news had been brought of it to the king. Saleh's influence had united them all; and the king's ſickneſs

neſs had made this eaſier than it otherwiſe would have been. It happened, then, that, the king's fever abating the ninth day, he ſent out to procure himſelf veniſon, with which this country abounds, and which is believed, by people of all ranks in Abyſſinia, to be the only proper food and reſtorative after ſickneſs. After having killed ſufficiently for the king's immediate uſe, the huntſmen returned; two only remained, who continued the purſuit of the game through the woods, till they were four days journey diſtant from their camp, when, being in ſearch of water for their dogs, they met a Moor engaged in the ſame buſineſs with themſelves, who ſhewed them his army encamped at no conſiderable diſtance, and in very great numbers. Upon this they returned in all haſte to the king to apprize him of his danger, and he ſent immediately ſome horſe to diſcover the number, ſituation, and deſigns of the enemy; above all, if poſſible, to take a priſoner, for the huntſmen had put theirs to death, that he might be no incumbrance to them upon their return.

The king's fever was now gone, but his ſtrength was not returned; and, the neceſſity of the caſe requiring it, he attempted to riſe from his bed and put on his armour, but, fainting, fell upon his face with weakneſs, while his ſervant was girding his ſword.

The horſe now returned, and confirmed the tidings the huntſmen had brought; they had found the Mooriſh army in the ſame place it was firſt diſcovered, by the water-ſide; but the account of their number and appearance was ſuch that the whole army

army was ſtruck with a panic. The king's wives (as the hiſtorian ſays, by which it ſhould appear he had more than one) endeavoured to perſuade him not to riſk a battle in the weak ſtate of health he then was, but to retire from this low, unwholeſome country, and occupy the paſſes that lead into Upper Abyſſinia, ſo as to make it impoſſible for the enemy to follow him into Shoa.

The king having waſhed and refreſhed himſelf, with a countenance full of confidence, ſat down at the door of his tent: whilſt officers and ſoldiers crowded about him, he calmly, in the way of converſation, told them,—"That, being men of ex-
"perience as they were, he was ſurpriſed they
"ſhould be liable, at every inſtant, to panic and
"deſpondency, totally unworthy the character of
"a veteran army. You know," ſaid he, "that I
"came againſt the king of Adel, and to recover
"that province, one of the old dependencies of
"my crown. And though it has happened that,
"in our march, you have loaded yourſelves with
"riches, which I have permitted, as well out of
"my love to you, as becauſe it diſtreſſes the enemy
"yet my object was not to plunder merchants. If
"in battle to-morrow I be beaten, for God forbid
"that I ſhould decline it when offered, I ſhall be
"the firſt to ſet you the example how to die like
"men in the middle of your enemies. But while
"I am living, it never ſhall be ſaid that I ſuffered
"the ſtandard of Chriſt to fly before the profane
"enſigns of infidels. As to what regards our pre-
"ſent circumſtances, my ſickneſs, and the number
"of the Mooriſh troops, theſe make no alteration

"in

" in my good hopes that I ſhall tread upon the " king of Adel's neck to-morrow. For as it was " never my opinion that it was my own ſtrength " and valour, or their want of it, which has ſo " often been the means of preſerving me from their " hands, ſo I do not fear at preſent that my acci- " dental weakneſs will give them any advantage " over me, as long as I truſt in God's ſtrength as " much as ever I have done."

The army, hearing with what confidence and firmneſs the king ſpake, began to look upon his recovery as a miracle. They all, therefore, with one accord, took to their arms, and deſired to be led forward to the enemy, without waiting till they ſhould come to them. They only beſeeched the king that he would not expoſe his perſon as uſual, but truſt to the bravery of his troops, eager for action, without being laviſh of that life, the loſs of which would be to the Mahometans a greater victory than the regaining all he had conquered. The king hereon, bidding his troops to be of good courage, take reſt and refreſhment, ſent away the women, children, and other incumbrances, to a ſmall convent on the ſide of the mountain, called *Debra Martel**; and, being informed of the ſituation of the country in general, and the particular poſts where he could get water in greater plenty, he advanced with his army by a ſlow march towards the enemy.

The next day he received intelligence by a Moor, that the Mahometans had not only thrown poiſon into

* Mountain of the Teſtimony.

into all the wells, but had alſo corrupted all the water in the front of the army by various ſpells and inchantments; that they were not advancing, but were waiting for troops from ſome of the ſmall diſtricts of Adel that had not yet joined the army. Hereupon the king ordered his Fit-Auraris to advance a day before him, and ſent a prieſt, called *Tecla Sion*, with him, that he might bleſs and conſecrate the water, and thereby free it from the inchantments of the Moors. He himſelf followed with his army, and ſat down by a ſmall river a ſhort way diſtant from the enemy.

The Fit-Auraris is an officer that commands a party of men, who go always advanced before the front of an Abyſſinian army, at a greater or ſmaller diſtance, according as circumſtances require. His office will be deſcribed more at large in the ſequel.

The king being arrived at the river, the army began to bathe themſelves, their mules, and their horſes, in the ſame manner as is uſual throughout all Abyſſinia on the feaſt of the Epiphany. This luſtration was in honour of Tecla Sion, who had conſecrated the water, broken all the magic ſpells, and changed its name to that of the river Jordan. But, while they were thus employed, the Fit-Auraris had come up with a large party of the enemy, and, with them, a number of women, provided with drugs to poiſon and inchant the water; and this numerous body of fanatics had fallen ſo rudely on the Fit-Auraris that it beat him back on the main body, to whom he brought the news of his own defeat.

A violent

A violent panic immediately ſeized the whole Abyſſinian army, and they refuſed to advance a ſtep farther. The tents had been left ſtanding on the ſide of the river they firſt came to, and they then paſſed to the other ſide But, upon ſight of the Fit-Auraris, they returned to the tents, that having the river on their front, they might fight the enemy with more advantage if they came to attack them. They did not continue long in this reſolution; the greateſt part of them were for leaving their tents, and retiring to Abyſſinia for aſſiſtance, and, when the numbers ſhould be more upon an equality, return to fight the enemy. The Mooriſh army at this inſtant coming in ſight, increaſed the number of converts to this opinion.

The king, in the utmoſt agony, galloping through the ranks, continued to uſe all manner of arguments with his mutinous ſoldiers. He told them, that retiring to their camp was to put themſelves in priſon; that, being moſtly compoſed of horſe their advantage was in a plain like that before them; that retreating to join the main body, at ſuch a diſtance, was a vain idea, as the enemy was ſo cloſe at their heels. Finally, all he deſired of them was, that thoſe who would not fight ſhould only ſtand as ſpectators, but not leave their places. As no ſign of content or conviction was returned, the king, ſeeing that all was loſt if they diſbanded, the enemy being juſt ready to engage, ordered his maſter of the horſe, and five others, to attack the left wing of the enemy, while he, with a ſmall part of his ſervants and houſehold, did the ſame on the right.

The

The Abyſſinian hiſtory, ſeldom juſt to the memory of individuals, hath yet, in this inſtance, (almoſt a ſingle one), preſerved the names of theſe brave men. The firſt was Zana Asferi; the ſecond, Tecla; the third, Wanag Araad; the fourth, Saif Segued, (one of the king's ſons;) the fifth, Badel Waliz; and the ſixth, Kedami. Theſe, as is ſuppoſed, with their attendants and ſervants, (though hiſtory is ſilent but as to the ſix) fell furiouſly on the left of the Mahometan army.

The king, at the firſt onſet, killed, with his own hand, the two leaders of the right wing; and his ſon, Saif Segued, having alſo ſlain another conſiderable officer on the left, a panic ſeized both theſe bodies of Moors, and the army apparently began, at one and the ſame time, to waver: On which the Abyſſinians, now aſhamed of their conduct, and perceiving the king's danger, with a great ſhout fell furiouſly upon the enemy. The whole Mooriſh army having, by this time, joined, the battle was fought with great obſtinacy on both ſides, till firſt the center, then the left wing of the Moors, was broken and diſperſed; but the right, conſiſting chiefly of ſtrangers from Arabia, kept together, and, not knowing the country, retired into a narrow deep valley ſurrounded by ſteep perpendicular rocks, covered thick with wood.

The abyſſinian army, thinking all at an end by the flight of the Moors, began, after their uſual cuſtom, to plunder, by ſtripping and mangling the bodies of the killed and wounded. But the king, who, from the miſtake of the Arabians, ſaw the deſtruction of this right wing certain, if immediately purſued,

ſued, ordered it every where to be proclaimed through the field, that the whole army ſhould repair to the royal ſtandard, which he had ſet up on an eminence, and give over plundering, under pain of death. Finding this order, however, ſlackly obeyed, he himſelf, ſcouring the field at the head of a few horſe, with his own hand ſlew two of his ſoldiers whom he found ſtripping the dead without regard to his proclamation. This example from a prince, exceedingly ſparing of the blood of his ſoldiers, had the effect to recall them all to the royal ſtandard diſplayed on a riſing ground.

He then ſeparated his army into two diviſions; all the foot, and thoſe of his horſe that had principally ſuffered in the ſevere engagement of the day, he led up to the mouth of the valley where the right wing of the Arabians had ſhut themſelves up; and, having beſet all acceſs to the entrance of it, he ordered the foot to climb up through the woods, and on every ſide ſurround the valley above the heads of thoſe unhappy people thus devoted to certain deſtruction.

While this was doing, the king ordered thoſe of the cavalry that had ſuffered leaſt in the fatigue of the day, to refreſh themſelves and their horſes. He knew no time was loſt by this, as the Mooriſh army that eſcaped from the engagement, worn out with fatigue, thirſt, and hunger, would only retire a ſhort day's march to the water, where, finding themſelves not purſued, and incumbered with the number of their wounded, they would neceſſarily reſt themſelves; and this was preciſely the ſituation,

tion, in which his huntſmen firſt found them by the ſide of a large pool of water.

The king gave the command of this part of his army to the maſter of the horſe, with orders to purſue them one day farther; whilſt he, having taken a ſhort refreſhment, began to attack the right wing of the Arabians ſhut up in the valley. The king, diſmounting led the attack againſt the front of the Arabians, who, ſeeing their ſituation now deſperate, began to make every effort to get from the valley into the plain. But they did not know yet upon what diſadvantageous ground they were engaged, till the ſoldiers from the rocks above, every way ſurrounding them, rolled down immenſe ſtones which paſſed through them in all directions. Preſſed, therefore, violently, by the king in their front, and in the rear deſtroyed by an enemy they neither could ſee nor reſiſt, they fell immediately into confuſion, and were, to a man, ſlaughtered upon the ſpot; upon which the king, giving to his troops orders for a general plunder, retired himſelf to his camp, and in his tent received from the maſter of the horſe an account of his expedition.

This officer had proceeded ſlowly, ſpreading his troops as wide as poſſible upon the tract of the retreating enemy, to give a ſmaller chance for any to eſcape. All directed their flight towards the pool of water, and were there deſtroyed without mercy, till a little after ſun-ſet. The purſuers had then advanced to the ground where Saleh king of Mara had gathered the ſcattered remains of his once powerful army, but now overcome with heat, diſpirited by their defeat, and worn out by the fa-

tigues

tigues of a long and obſtinate engagement, all that remained of theſe unfortunate troops were ſtrowed upon the ground, lapping water like beaſts, their only comfort that remained, equally incapable of fighting or flying. The maſter of the horſe, in great vigour and ſtrength from his late refreſhments and recent victory, had no trouble with theſe unfortunate people but to direct their execution, and this was performed by the ſoldiers with all the rage and cruelty that a difference of religion could poſſibly inſpire. For, after the king's ſpeech of the 9th of June, in which he upbraided them with breach of their oath, and that they were ſlow in avenging the blood of their brethren and prieſts wantonly ſlain by the Moors, every man in the army meaſured the exactneſs with which he acquitted himſelf of the ſacrament at Hawaſh, only by the quantity of blood that he could ſhed. Weary at laſt with butchery, a few were taken priſoners, and among theſe was Saleh king of Mara. It was evening before the king returned from the ſlaughter of the right wing; and it was night when the ſoldiers, as fatigued with plundering as with fighting, returned to the camp.

The next morning, he heard of the ſucceſs of his cavalry under the maſter of the horſe, who joined him before mid-day. The unfortunate Saleh was in ſight of the whole army, brought before the king, cloathed in the diſtinguiſhed habit and marks of his dignity in which he had fought the day before at the head of his troops; gold chains were about his arms, and a gold collar, enriched with precious ſtones about his neck. The king ſcarcely deigned

deigned to ſpeak to him, whilſt the royal priſoner likewiſe obſerved a profound ſilence. When the army had ſatisfied their curioſity with the ſight of this prince, (once the object of their fear), the king, by a motion of his hand, ordered him to be hanged upon a tree at the entrance of the camp, with all the ornaments he had upon him. After this the queen of Mara, concerning whom ſo many ſurpriſing ſtories had been told of her poiſoning the waters by drugs and inchantments, was, notwithſtanding the known partiality of this king for the fair ſex, ordered to hewn in pieces by the ſoldiers, and her body given to the dogs.

Amda Sion then diſpatched a meſſenger with the news of his victory to the queens his wives, and the reſt of the ladies he had left with the main army at Debra Martel, when the monks of the convent immediately began a ſolemn proceſſion and thankſgiving, attended by the exerciſe of every ſort of work of charity and piety.

It was now the end of July, when the rains in Abyſſinia become both conſtant and violent, that the king called a council of the principal nobility, officers, and prieſts, to determine whether he ſhould go ſtraight home, or ſend their wives, children, and baggage before them the direct road, when the light and unincumbered army ſhould take a compaſs, and lay waſte part of the kingdom of Adel they had already invaded, and return in another direction. The majority of the army, and the prieſts above all, were for the firſt propoſal; but the king and principal officers thought the advantages gained by ſo much blood were to be followed,

not

not deſerted, till they ſhould either have reduced the Mahometans to a ſtate of weakneſs that ſhould make them no longer formidable to Abyſſinia, or, if proſperous fortune ſtill attended them further, extirpate the people and religion together.—This opinion prevailed.

The king, therefore, diſmiſſed his baggage, his women, children, ſervants, and uſeleſs people. He retained an army of veteran ſoldiers only, more formidable than ſix times the number that could be brought againſt them; and, truſting now to the country into which he had marched for ſupport, he advanced, and entered a town called Zeyla, and there took up his quarters. He had ſcarce taken poſſeſſion of the town, when that very night he ſent a detachment to ſurpriſe a large and rich village called Taraca, where he put all the men to the ſword, making the women ſlaves for the ſervice of the army, inſtead of thoſe whom he had ſent home.

The king's views, by ſuch ſmall expeditions, were to accuſtom his ſoldiers to fight out of his preſence, and wean them from a perſuaſion, now become general, that victory could not be obtained but where he commanded.

On the 10th of July, the king continued his march, without oppoſition, to Darbe, whence, the next morning, he ſent different parties to the right and left, to burn and deſtroy the country. They accordingly laid waſte all the province of Gaſſi, ſlaying Abdullah the Sherriffe, who was the governor and ſon of Saruch the Imam, author of the conſpiracy againſt him. From thence he fell ſuddenly

upon Abalgé and Talab, a large diſtrict belonging to the king of Adel.

This prince, hearing that Amda Sion, inſtead of returning as was uſual in the rainy ſeaſon, into Abyſſinia, had determined to continue to ravage his whole country, had not, on his part, been remiſs in preparing means to reſiſt him; and he had aſſembled, from every province, all the forces they could raiſe, to make one laſt effort againſt their common enemy.

Amda Sion, therefore, had ſcarcely retired from the deſtruction of Talab, when the king of Adel (become now deſperate by being ſo long a ſpectator of the ruin of his kingdom) marched haſtily to meet him, with much leſs precaution than his own ſituation, and the character of his enemy, required. Amda Sion, whoſe whole wiſh was to bring the Moors to an engagement as often as occaſion preſented, left off his plundering upon the firſt news that the king of Adel had taken the field, and allowing him to chooſe the ground on which he was to fight, the next day he marched againſt him, having (as ſure of victory) firſt detached bodies of horſe to intercept thoſe of the Moors that ſhould fly when defeated; For no general was more provident than this king for the deſtruction of his enemy. He then led his troops againſt the king of Adel, and, ſpurring his horſe, was already in the midſt of the Mooriſh army before the moſt active of his ſoldiers had time to follow him. The Abyſſinians, as uſual, threw themſelves like madmen upon the Moors, at the ſight of the king's danger. The king of Adel was defeated with little reſiſtance: that unfortunate prince himſelf

ſelf was ſlain upon the ſpot, and the greateſt part of his army deſtroyed (after they thought themſelves ſafe) by the ambuſhes of freſh horſe the king had placed in their rear before the battle.

The three children of the king of Adel, and his brother, who had all been in the engagement, ſeeing the great inferiority of their troops, and terrified at the approaching fate of their country, loading themſelves with the moſt valuable of their effects, (which, in token of humility, they carried upon their heads, ſhoulders, and in their hands,) came with theſe preſents before the king, who was ſitting armed at the door of his tent, and, without further apology, or aſſurance given, threw themſelves, as is the cuſtom of Abyſſinia, at his feet, with their foreheads in the duſt, intreating pardon for what had hitherto been done amiſs; ſubmitting to him as his ſubjects, profeſſing their readineſs to obey all his commands, provided only that he would proceed no further, nor waſte and deſtroy their country, but ſpare what ſtill remained, which was, for the moſt part, the property of Arabian merchants who had done him no injury.

But the king ſeemed little diſpoſed to credit theſe aſſurances. He told them plainly, "That "they, and all Ethiopia, knew the time was when "they were under his dominion, paid him the ſame "tribute, and owed him the ſame allegiance with "the reſt of his ſubjects; that neither he, nor his "predeceſſors, at that time, had ever oppreſſed "them, but returned them preſent for preſent, "gold for gold, apparel for apparel, and diſmiſſed "them contentedly home whenever they came to

" pay their duty to them: That lately, from ſup-
" poſed weakneſs in him, when he was young in
" the beginning of his reign, and encouraged by
" the great addition of their brethren, who flocked
" to them from Arabia, they had, without provo-
" cation, thrown off their allegiance to him, up-
" braiding him as an eunuch, fit only to take care of
" the women of their ſeraglio, with many ſuch
" taunting meſſages, equally unworthy of the ma-
" jeſty and memory of a prince like him: That,
" could this be paſſed over, ſtill there was a crime
" that all the blood of Adel could not atone for:
" They had, without provocation, murdered his
" prieſts, burnt their churches, and deſtroyed his
" defenceleſs people in their villages, merely from
" a vain belief that they were too far to be under
" his protection: That, to puniſh them for this,
" he was now in the midſt of their country, and,
" if his life was ſpared, never would he turn his
" back upon Adel while he had ten men with him
" capable of drawing their ſwords. He, therefore,
" ordered them to return, and expect the approach
" of his army."

The two eldeſt children and the brother were ſo ſtruck with the fierce manner and countenance with which the king ſpoke, that they remained perfectly ſilent. But the youngeſt ſon (a youth of great ſpirit, and who, with the utmoſt difficulty, had been forced by his parents to fly after the battle) anſwered the king with great reſolution:—

" It is a truth known to the whole kingdom, that
" Adel has never belonged to any ſovereign on
" earth but to ourſelves. Violence and power,
" which

" which deſtroy and ſet up kingdoms, have at times
" done ſo with ours; but that you are not otherwiſe,
" than by theſe means, king of our country, our
" colour, ſtature *, and complexion ſufficiently
" ſhew. We have been free, and were conquered;
" we now have attempted to regain our freedom,
" and we have failed: We have not been inferior
" to you in every kind of civility, receiving you
" and your predeceſſors when you came into our
" country, ſinging before you, and rejoicing, be-
" cauſe we knew that you had always among you
" men of great worth and bravery.

" As to the accuſation againſt us, that we have
" robbed the Chriſtians, you yourſelf ſee the riches
" of our country, which we get by our own in-
" duſtry and commerce, whilſt the Abyſſinians
" were naked ſhepherds and robbers. In the days
" of your predeceſſors, a handful of us would have
" chaſed an army of them, and it would be ſo now,
" were it not for the perſonal valour and conduct
" of *you* their prince. But you, better than any
" one, can be the judge of this; and I can appeal
" to you, how often they have been upon the point
" of deſerting you, in return for all the victories
" and riches they have ſhared with you; while
" there is not a Moor in Adel but would have
" willingly died in the preſence of ſuch a prince
" as you. It is then *you*, not your army that we
" fear; we know perfectly the value of both.
" You have already enjoyed all the merit and pro-
" fit of conqueſt; but utterly deſtroying defence-

" leſs

* The Moors in general are much ſquarer, ſtouter-made men, than the Abyſſinians.

" leſs people is unworthy of any king, and ſtill " more of a prince of your character."

The king, without any ſign of diſpleaſure at the freedom of this ſpeech, anſwered him calmly: " Words and reſolutions like theſe occaſioned your " father to loſe his life in battle. I come not to " argue with you what you are to do, nor did I " ſend for you to preach to you; but if the queen " your mother, the reſt of your father's family, " and the principal people, who after your father's " death, are now to govern Adel, do not, by to- " morrow evening, ſurrender themſelves to me " at my tent-door, as you have done, I will lay " the province of Adel waſte, from the place " where I now ſit, to the borders of the ocean."

This unpromiſing interview with the king was faithfully communicated by the young princes to their mother, earneſtly deſiring her to truſt the king's mercy, and to throw herſelf at his feet the next morning without reſerve. But thoſe who had been the perſuaders of the war (for the late king of Adel was but a weak prince) reckoned themſelves in much greater danger with Amda Sion than was the royal family. They therefore agreed to try their fortune again in battle, binding themſelves to live and die with each other, by mutual oaths and promiſes. They alſo ſent to the princes this reſolution, by an old enemy of Amda Sion, perſuading them to make their eſcape as ſoon as poſſible, and come and head their forces that were then raiſed, and ready to conquer or die together, when the family ſhould be out of the enemy's hands.

The

The king, well informed of what had paſſed, decamped immediately from the ſtation where he was, exceedingly irritated; and, having paſſed the great river called Aco, he took poſt in the town of Marmagab; and the next day, dividing his army, he ſent two bodies by different routes into the enemy's territories, with a ſtrict command to leave nothing undeſtroyed that had the breath of life; he himſelf with the third diviſion, burning and laying waſte the whole country before him, proceeded ſtraight to the place where he heard the chiefs of Adel were aſſembling an army. There he found ſome troops, moſtly infantry, who kept a good countenance, and ſeemed perfectly prepared and diſpoſed to engage him. But an immenſe multitude of uſeleſs people covered the plain, old men, women, and children, with the parents, wives, and families of thoſe he had already ſlain; and theſe were determined, with the remnant of their countrymen, to conquer this invader, or to periſh.

The king, upon perceiving this ſtrange mixture, halted for a time in great ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment. He could not penetrate into the motive of aſſembling ſuch an army; and ſending a party of horſe, as it were to diſperſe them, he found every where a ſtout reſiſtance; ſoldiers well provided with ſwords and ſhields, and a multitude of archers, who rained ſhowers of arrows upon him, while the women, with clubs, poles, ſtakes, and ſtones, damped the ardour of his ſoldiers, who, when they firſt charged, ſcarcely expected reſiſtance. The king, ſeeing the battle every minute become more doubtful, and having but few troops, began to repent

pent that he had weakened his army by detachments; he inſtantly diſpatched orders to them to advance, and fall upon the enemy in the neareſt direction poſſible. At the ſame time, he himſelf made an extraordinary effort with his horſe, but all in vain; and he found, on every ſide, people who preſented themſelves willingly to death, but who would not quit their ſtation while they had power to defend themſelves in it.

Conſpicuous above all theſe for his dreſs, his youth, his many acts of valour, and his graceful figure, was the young king of Wypo, who, encouraging his troops, preſented himſelf wherever Amda Sion was in perſon. The remarkable reſiſtance that this young prince made, ſoon drew the attention of the king of Abyſſinia; who, ſheathing his ſword, took a bow in his hand, and, as my hiſtorian ſays, chooſing the broadeſt arrow he could find, ſtruck this young hero through the middle of his neck, ſo that, half being cut through, his head inclined to one ſhoulder, and ſoon after he fell dead among his horſe's feet.

This ſight was one juſt calculated to ſtrike ſuch an army as this with terror. They immediately turned their backs, and, unluckily falling in with two detachments marching to the king's relief, they were all cut to pieces to the number of 5000; a great proportion of which were women and aged perſons, unſkilled in war, further than as they were prompted by a long ſufferance of injuries, accumulated now to a maſs, that made them weary of life. My hiſtorian further ſays, that three only of the Mooriſh army eſcaped. On the king's ſide many principal

principal officers were killed; and there was ſcarce one horſeman that was not wounded. Amda Sion, therefore, when ſpeaking of this campaign, after his return, among his nobility at Shoa, uſed to ſay, "Deliver me from fighting with old women;" alluding to this battle, where he was in the greateſt danger. The fate of the unfortunate king of Wypo was particularly hard. He had lately married the king of Adel's daughter; and it was the ſtaying for him, and his marriage, that loſt the favourable opportunity of fighting the Abyſſinians, when the army was in deſpondency upon the king's being taken ill of the fever.

The next campaign the king began, by a march firſt to Saſſogade, where he aſſiſted at the celebration of the feaſt of St. John the Baptiſt; and he gave orders, that day, to raze all the Mahometan moſques to the ground, to deſtroy all the grain, burn the villages, and put the people to the ſword, which was executed accordingly. The king then decamped the fourth of July; and, paſſing the great river (Zorat) came to the country of the Oritii, and took up his quarters there. The people of this province were in the very worſt reputation for cruelty, and hatred of the Chriſtian name. They were perpetually making incurſions into the Chriſtian villages, and thoſe that fell alive into their hands, they either caſtrated, cut off their noſe or ears, or otherwiſe mangled them.

The king, to vindicate the ſeverity he was about to exerciſe, ordered all thoſe people, who had ſuffered in this manner, to be collected and brought before him. The number appeared very conſiderable;

able; and, having inquired in what occupations they had been employed, they anſwered, that their buſineſs was to cut down wood, draw and fetch water, and ſome of them to take care of the Mooriſh women. Violently affected with this, he called his principal officers, and commanded them, that, when he decamped with his army the next day, ſmall parties ſhould remain in ambuſh on each ſide of the town. The king, early in the morning, marched out with ſound of trumpet; and the Moors, thinking the army gone, returning to their houſes, were ſet upon by the parties, and deſtroyed.

The next place the king came to was Haggaras where he ſtaid eight days, and celebrated there the feaſt of the Croſs; ſurrounding his camp with paliſades, as if he was to ſtay there a conſiderable time. Here he made his ſoldiers depoſit all their plunder, leaving it under the care of a weak guard, and marched out with ſound of trumpet, as if he was going upon ſome expedition. There was a large body of troops in ambuſh, and the Moors, concealed in woods, and hiding-places, attacked the intrenchments as ſoon as the king was gone, and had forced the paliſades, when they were every where ſurrounded by the parties left behind, and were all cut to pieces, excepting the old men and women, whoſe noſes and lips the king ordered to be cut off, by way of retaliation and then diſmiſſed them. Great ſtore of bows, good arms and cloathing, were taken here, lately brought from Arabia for the uſe of the confederates.

The king now turned his face homewards, marched off in ſeven days to Begul in the Sahara, and thence

thence ſent a meſſage to the governor of Iſat, commanding him to ſend to him all thoſe Chriſtians who had apoſtatized from their faith in his or his brother's time; with notice, that, if he did not comply, he would put him and all his family to death, and give his command to another family. The king ordered theſe apoſtates, when delivered, to be ſeverely whipped, and, fettering them with heavy irons, impriſoned them.

From Begul the army marched to Waz, thence to Gett, and from Gett to Harla, ſtill laying waſte the country. From Harla they marched five days to Delhoya, being determined to make a ſevere example of this place, becauſe the inhabitants had killed the governor the king had left with them, and, making large fires for the purpoſe, had burnt and tormented the Chriſtians reſiding there. He He came, therefore, upon this town, and ſurrounded it in the night; and, after putting men, women, and children to the ſword, he razed it to the ground.

From Delhoya he proceeded to Degwa, from thence to Warga, which he treated in the ſame manner as Delhoya, and then entered the province of Dawaro, where he underſtood that Hydar, governor of that province, with Saber-eddin, and a very valuable convoy coming to him, under their conduct, from Shoa, were intercepted by Hydar's people, and their guard cut to pieces. Inſtead, therefore, of proceeding to Shoa, as his intention was, he encamped at Bahalla, and there kept the feaſt of Chriſtmas, laying the whole province, by parties, under military execution; and hearing there that Joſeph, governor of Serca, was in underſtanding

derſtanding with thoſe of Dawaro, he put him in priſon, carrying off all his horſes, aſſes, mules, and a prodigious quantity of other cattle, which he drove before him, and ended his expedition by his entry into Shoa.

This is the Abyſſinian account of the reign of their prince Amda Sion, a little abridged, and made more conformable to the manner of writing Engliſh hiſtory. The hiſtorian, contrary to the uſual practice, gives no account of himſelf; but he ſeems to have lived in the time of Zara Jacob, the third reign after this. Though he wrote in Shoa, his book is in pure Geez, there being ſcarcely an Amharic word in it.

There are three things which I would now obſerve; not becauſe they are ſingle inſtances, but, on the contrary, becauſe, though firſt mentioned here, they are uniformly confirmed throughout the whole Abyſſinian hiſtory.

The firſt is, that the king of Abyſſinia, is, in all matters eccleſiaſtical and civil, ſupreme; that he puniſhes all offences committed by the clergy in as abſolute and direct a manner as if theſe offences were committed by a layman. Of this the treatment of Honorius is an example, who made uſe only of ſpiritual weapons againſt offences, that ſurely deſerve the cenſure of all churches.

With whatever propriety this ſentence might have been inflicted upon individuals, and, perhaps, without any bad conſequence to the public in general, the law of the land, in Abyſſinia, could not ſuffer this to be inflicted on their king, becauſe very bad effects muſt have followed it towards the common-

monweal; for excommunication there is really a capital punishment if executed with rigour. It is a kind of *interdictio aquæ et ignis*, for you yourself are expressly prohibited from kindling a fire, and every body else is laid under a prohibition from supplying either fire or water. No one can speak, eat, or drink with you, enter your house, or suffer you to enter theirs. You cannot buy nor sell, nor recover debts. If under this situation you should be violently slain by robbers, no inquisition is made into the cause of your death, and your body is not suffered to be buried.

I would submit now to the judgment of any one, what sort of government there would be in Abyssinia, if a priest was suffered to lay the king under such interdict or restriction. The kings of that country do not pretend to be saints, indeed, it may be said, they are the very contrary, leading very free lives. Pretences are never wanting, and it is only necessary to find a fanatic priest (which, God knows, is not a rarity in that country) to unhinge government perpetually, and throw all into anarchy and confusion. But nothing of this kind occurs in their history, though the bigotted Le Grande, and some of the Jesuits, less bigotted than him, have asserted, that such a practice prevailed in the Abyssian church, to shew its conformity with the church of Rome; which we shall see, however, contradicted almost in every prince's reign.

The second thing I shall observe is, that there is no ground for that prejudice, so common in the writers concerning this country, who say that these people are Nomades, perpetually roving about in tents. If they had ever so little reflected upon it, there

there is not a country in the world where this is leſs poſſible than in Abyſſinia, a country abounding with mountains, where every flat piece of ground is, once a-day, during ſix months rain, cut through by a number of torrents, ſweeping cattle, trees, and every thing irreſiſtibly before them; where no field, unleſs it has ſome declivity, can be ſown, nor even paſſed over by a traveller, without ſome danger of being ſwept away, during the hours of the day when the rain is moſt violent; in ſuch a country it would be impoſſible for 30 or 40,000 men to encamp from place to place, and to ſubſiſt without ſome permanent retreat. Accordingly they have towns and villages perched upon the pinnacles of ſharp hills and rocks, and which are never thought ſafe if commanded by any ground above them; in theſe they remain, as we do in cities, all the rainy ſeaſon: Nor is there a private perſon (not a ſoldier) who hath a tent more than in Britain. In the fair ſeaſon, the military encamp in all directions croſs the country, either to levy taxes, or in ſearch of their enemy; but nothing in this is particular to Abyſſinia; in moſt parts of Africa and Aſia they do the ſame.

The third particular to be obſerved here is, that, in this prince's reign, the king's ſons were not impriſoned in the mountain. For Saif Araad was preſent with his father at the defeat of Saleh king of Mara, and yet the mountain of Geſhen was then ſet apart as a priſon. For the Itcheguè of Debra Libanos was baniſhed there; from which I infer, that after the maſſacre of the royal family by Judith, on the mountain of Damo, and the flight of the prince

prince Del Naad, to Shoa, the king's children were not confined, nor yet till long after their reſtoration and return to Tigré, as will appear in the ſequel.

Amda Sion died of a natural death at Tegulat in Shoa, after a reign of 30 years, which were but a continued ſeries of victories, no inſtance being recorded of his having been once defeated.

## SAIF ARAAD.

From 1342 to 1370.

*This Prince enjoys a peaceable Reign—Protects the Patriarch of Cophts at Cairo from the Perſecution of the Soldan.*

SAIF ARAAD ſucceeded his father Amda Sion; and it ſhould ſeem that, in his time, all was peaceable on the ſide of Adel, as nothing is mentioned relative to that war. Indeed, if the increaſe of trade and power in that corner of Abyſſinia aroſe from the troubles and want of ſecurity which the merchants laboured under in Arabia, we cannot but ſuſpect, from a parity of reaſoning, that the violent manner in which war had been carried on by Amda Sion, muſt have occaſioned a great many inhabitants to repaſs the Straits, and return to their own homes.

At this time, news were brought from Cairo, that the Soldan had thrown the Coptic patriarch, Marcus, into priſon. There was then a conſtant trade carried on between Cairo and Abyſſinia, through the

the deſert; and alſo from Cairo and Suakem on the Red Sea. Beſides, great caravans, formerly compoſed of Pagans, now of Mahometans, paſſed from weſt to eaſt, in the ſame manner as in ancient times, to buy and diſperſe India goods through Africa. Saif Araad, not having it in his power to give the patriarch other aſſiſtance, ſeized all the merchants from Cairo, and ſent horſe to interrupt and terrify the caravans. As the cauſe of this was well known, and that the patriarch was in priſon for the ſake only of extorting money from him, people on all ſides cried out upon the bad policy of the Soldan, who thereupon ordered Abuna Marcus to be ſet at liberty, without any other condition, than that he ſhould make peace with Saif Araad on the part of Egypt, which was done through the mediation of that prelate.

## WEDEM ASFERI.

From 1370 to 1380.

*Memoirs of this and the following Reign defective.*

WE know nothing of this prince, only that he ſucceeded his father Saif Araad, and reigned ten years; yet his name, which ſignifies *lover of war*, ſeems to indicate an active reign. It is remarkable, that in this reign is firſt mentioned an æra of Abyſſinian chronology, which has very much puzzled ſeveral learned writers, and the origin of which is not,

not, perhaps, yet fully known. This is that epoch, called that of Maharat, or Mercy, which Scaliger and Ludolf have called the æra of grace. Scaliger ſays, he has toiled much before he found out what it was; and I doubt his toil has not been bleſſed with all the ſucceſs we could wiſh. That it is not the æra of redemption, is plain upon a hundred trials, nor of the converſion, nor of Dioclefian. What it alludes to we know not, but it is firſt quoted in the Abyſſinian hiſtory in this reign, and anſwers to the year 1348 of Chriſt; but from what event it had its origin we cannot poſitively ſay, nor further, than that all which Scaliger has ſaid concerning it is merely viſionary.

## DAVID II.

From 1380 to 1409.

WEDEM ASFERI was ſucceeded by his brother David, Saif Araad's ſecond ſon. This prince's reign is remarkable in the annals of the church of Abyſſinia, becauſe, at this time, a piece of the true croſs, on which our Saviour died, was brought hither from Jeruſalem; and, in memory of this great event, the king ordered the ſacerdotal veſt, or capa, which was before plain, to be embroidered with flowers.

This king, after reigning twenty-nine years, one day viewing a favourite, but vicious horſe, received ſo violent a kick upon his head that it fractured

his ſkull, ſo that he died upon the ſpot, and was buried in the great iſland of Dek in the lake Dembea, or Tzana.

## THEODORUS.

From 1409 to 1412.

*Memoirs of this Reign, though held in great Eſteem in Abyſſinia, defective; probably mutilated by the Eccleſiaſtics.*

DAVID was ſucceeded by his eldeſt ſon Theodorus. He is called Son of the Lion, by the poet, in the Ethiopic encomium upon him, ſtill extant in the liturgy. A miracle is mentioned to have happened, (which would lead us to ſuſpect that he was a ſaint), during the celebration of his feſtival, by his mother, who is called Mogeſſa*. This lady had contented herſelf with providing great quantity of fleſh for the feaſt; but, to make it more complete, the heavens in a ſhower ſupplied it with ſtore of fine fiſh, ready roaſted.

He was buried in the church of Tedba Mariam in Amhara, after having reigned three years. There muſt have been ſomething very brilliant that happened under this prince, for though the reign is ſo

* Probably Magwas, or Berhan Magwas, the Glory of Grace; a name often uſed by queens; for Mogeſſa has no ſignification, that I know, in any of the languages of Ethiopia.

ſo ſhort, it is before all others the moſt favourite epoch in Abyſſinia. It is even confidently believed, that he is to riſe again, and to reign in Abyſſinia for a thouſand years, and in this period all war is to ceaſe, and every one, in fulneſs, to enjoy happineſs, plenty, and peace. Fooliſh as theſe legends are, and diſtant the time, this one was the ſource of great trouble and perſonal danger to me, as will be ſeen in the ſequel. What we know certain in this prince's hiſtory is, that he abrogated the treaty of partition made by Icon Amlac in favour of the Abuna Tecla Haimanout and his ſucceſſors, by which one third of the kingdom of Abyſſinia was for ever to be ſet apart as a revenue for the Abuna. This wiſe prince modified ſo exceſſive a proviſion, reſerving to the Abuna for his maintenance a ſufficient territory in every province of the kingdom. It is ſtill judged immoderate, and has ſuffered many defalcations under later princes, who, perhaps, not acting upon the principles of Theodorus, have not been commended by poſterity in the manner he has been.

## ISAAC.

From 1412 to 1429.

*No Annals of this nor the four following Reigns.*

THEODORUS was ſucceeded by Iſaac his brother, ſecond ſon of David. In his reign the Falaſha, who, ſince their overthrow in the time of Amda

Sion, had been quiet, broke out into rebellion. We do not know the particulars, but apprehend ſome injuſtice was at that time done, or attempted againſt the Jews; for 24 Judges, 12 from Shoa and 12 from Tigré, (the number having been doubled when there were two kings reigning *), were of a different opinion, and would not comply with the king's will, who thereupon deprived them all of their office. The king, coming upon the army of the Falaſha in Woggora, entirely defeated them at Koſſogué, and, in memory thereof, built a church on the place, and called it Debra Iſaac, which remains there to this day.

Iſaac reigned near 17 years, was a prince of great piety and courage. The annals of his reign, probably during the troubleſome time that followed, have been loſt, and with them great part of his atchievements.

## ANDREAS I. OR AMDA SION.

Iſaac was ſucceeded by his ſon Andreas, who reigned only ſeven months, and they were both buried at Tedba Mariam.

TECLA

* That is, while the family of Zagué reigned in Tigré, and that of Solomon in Shoa, before the reſtoration.

## TECLA MARIAM, OR HASEB NANYA.

From 1429 to 1433.

This prince was third ſon of David, and ſucceeded his nephew. He reigned four years, and took for his inauguration name, Haſeb Nanya.

## SARWE YASOUS.

This prince was ſon of Tecla Mariam, he reigned only four months; his inauguration name was Maharak Nanya. He has been omitted in ſome of the liſts of kings.

## AMDA YASOUS.

Sarwe Yaſous was ſucceeded by his brother Amda Yaſous, whoſe inauguration name was Badel Nanya. He was ſecond ſon of Tecla Mariam, and reigned nine months.

ZARA

## ZARA JACOB.

From 1434 to 1468.

*Sends Ambaſſadors from Jeruſalem to the Council of Florence—Firſt Entry of the Roman Catholics into Abyſſinia, and Diſpute about Religion—King perſecutes the Remnants of Sabaiſm and Idolatry—Mahometan Provinces rebel, and are ſubdued—The King dies.*

THESE very ſhort reigns were followed by one of an extraordinary length. Zara Jacob, fourth ſon of David II. ſucceeded his nephew, and reigned 34 years, and, at his inauguration, took the name of Conſtantine. He is looked upon in Abyſſinia to have been another Solomon; and a model of what the beſt of ſovereigns ſhould be. From what we know of him, he ſeems to have been a prince who had the beſt opportunity, and with that the greateſt inclination to be inſtructed in the politics, manners, and religion of other countries.

A convent had been long before this eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem for the Abyſſinians, which he had in part endowed, as appears by his letters ſtill extant *, written to monks of that convent. He alſo obtained from the Pope † a convent for the Abyſſinians at Rome, which to this day is appropriated to them, though

* Vid. Ludolf, lib. 3. No. 29. I have this letter at length prefixed to the large volume of Canons and Councils, a copy of which was ſent by Zara Jacob to the monks in Jeruſalem.

† St. Stefano in Rotondis.

though it is very ſeldom that either there, or even at Jeruſalem, there are now any Abyſſinians. By his deſire, and in his name, ambaſſadors (*i. e.* prieſts from Jeruſalem) were ſent by Abba Nicodemus, the then Superior, who aſſiſted at the council of Florence, where, however, they adhered to the opinion of the Greek church about the proceeding of the Holy Ghoſt, which created a ſchiſm between the Greek and Latin churches. This embaſſy was thought of conſequence enough to be the ſubject of a painting in the Vatican, and to this picture we owe the knowledge of ſuch an embaſſy having been ſent.

The mild reign of the laſt Soldan of Egypt ſeems greatly to have favoured the diſpoſition of Zara Jacob, in maintaining an intercourſe with Europe and Aſia. And it is for the firſt time now in this reign that we read of a diſpute upon religion with the Franks, or Frangi, a name which afterwards became more odious and fatal to whomſoever it was applied. Abba George is ſaid to have diſputed before the king upon ſome point of his religion, and to have confuted his opponent even to conviction. We are not informed of the name of Abba George's antagoniſt, but he is thought to have been a Venetian painter *, who lived many years in Abyſſinia, and, it is believed, died there. From this time, however, in almoſt every reign, there appear marks of a party formed in favour of the church of Rome, which probably had its firſt riſe from the Abyſſinian embaſſy to the council of Florence.

Although

* Franciſco de Branca Leon

Although the eſtabliſhed religion in Abyſſinia was that of the Greek church of Alexandria, yet many different ſuperſtitions prevailed in every part of the country. On the coaſt of the Red Sea, as well as the Ocean, that is in the low provinces adjoining to the kingdom of Adel, the greateſt part of the inhabitants were Mahometans; and the conveniencies of trade had occaſioned theſe to diſperſe themſelves through many villages in the high country, eſpecially in Woggora, and in the neighbourhood of Gondar. Dembea on the ſouth, and the rugged diſtrict of Samen on the eaſt, were crowded with many deformed ſects, while the people of the low valleys, towards Nubia, the Agows at the head of the Nile, and thoſe of the ſame name, though of a different nation and language, at the head of the Tacazzé, in Laſta, were, for the greateſt part, Pagans, *i. e.* of the old religion of Sabeans, worſhipping the planets, ſtars, the wind, trees, and ſuch like. But a more abominable worſhip than this ſeemed eſpecially predominant among ſome of the Agows at the ſource of the Nile, and the people bordering upon Nubia, as they adored the cow and ſerpents for their gods, and ſuppoſed that, by the latter, they could divine all that was to happen to them in futurity.

Whether it was that a long war had thrown a veil over theſe abuſes, or whether (which is more probable) a ſpirit of toleration had ſtill prevailed in this country, which had at firſt been converted to Chriſtianity without blood-ſhed, it is not eaſy at this time to ſay. Only their hiſtory does not mention, that, before the reign of this prince, idolatry had been conſidered as a capital crime, or judicially inquired

quired into, and tried as ſuch. An accuſation, however, at this time, being brought againſt ſome families for worſhipping the cow and the ſerpent, they were, by the king's orders, ſeized and brought before himſelf ſitting in judgment, with the principal of his clergy, and with his officers of ſtate, with whom he aſſociated ſome ſtrangers, lately come from Jeruſalem; a cuſtom which prevails to this day. Theſe criminals were all capitally convicted, and executed. A proclamation followed, declaring, That any perſon who did not, upon his right hand, carry an amulet, with theſe words, *I renounce the devil for Chriſt our Lord*, ſhould forfeit his perſonal eſtate, and be liable to corporal puniſhment.

It has been the cuſtom of all Pagan nations to wear amulets upon their arms, and different parts of their bodies. From the Gentiles this uſage was probably firſt learned by the Jews. Amulets were adopted by the Mahometans, but, till now, not worn in Abyſſinia by any Chriſtians.

Theſe executions, which at firſt conſiſted of ſeven people only, began to be repeated in different places, and at different times. The perſon employed as inquiſitor, and the manner this examination was made, tended to make it ſtill more odious. Amda Sion, the Acab Saat, was the man to whom this perſecution was committed. He was the king's principal confident; of very auſtere manners: he neither ſhaved his head nor changed his cloaths; had no connection with women, nor with any great man in court; never ſaw the king but alone, and, when he appeared abroad, was conſtantly attended by a number of ſoldiers, with drums and trumpets,

and

and other equipage, not at all common for a clergyman. He had under him a number of ſpies, who brought him intelligence of any ſteps taken in idolatry or treaſon; and, after being, as he ſuppoſed, well informed, he went to the houſe of the delinquent, where he firſt refreſhed himſelf and his attendants, then ordered thoſe of the houſe he came for, and all that were with them, to be executed in his preſence.

Among thoſe that ſuffered were the king's two ſons-in-law, married to his daughters Medehan Zamidu, and Berhan Zamidu, having been accuſed by their wives, the one of adultery, the other of inceſt: they were both put to death in their own houſes, in a very private and ſuſpicious manner. This execution being afterwards declared by the king in an aſſembly of the clergy and ſtates, certain prieſts, or others, from Jeruſalem, in public, condemning this procedure of the king, as contrary to law, ſound policy, and the firſt principles of juſtice, which ſeems to have had ſuch an effect that we hear no more of theſe perſecutions, nor of Amda Sion the perſecutor, during the whole of this reign.

The king now turned his thoughts upon a nobler object, which was that of dividing his country into ſeparate governments, aſſigning to each the tax it ſhould pay, at what time, and in what manner, according to the ſituation and capacity of each province. The proſperity of the Mooriſh ſtates, from the extenſive trade conſtantly carried on there, the bad uſe they made of their riches by employing them in continual rebellions, made it neceſſary that

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the king ſhould ſee and inquire into each perſon's circumſtances, which he propoſed to do, as was uſual, before the time of their ſeveral inveſtitures.

The chief of the rich diſtrict of Gadai, was the firſt called on by the king, as it is on this occaſion that conſiderable preſents (ſeldom leſs than two years rent of the province) are given, about one half to the king, the other among his courtiers. There was, at this period, a Mooriſh woman of quality in court, called the queen of Zeyla. She had been brought to the palace with a view that the king ſhould marry her, but he diſliking her for the length, as is ſaid, or ſome other defect, in her fore-teeth, had married her to a nobleman.

This injury had ſunk very deep in the breaſt of the queen of Zeyla, though ſhe was only nominally ſo, having been expelled from her kingdom before her coming into Abyſſinia. But it happened that ſhe was ſiſter to Mihico ſon of Mahomet, chief of Gadai, whom ſhe earneſtly purſuaded to ſtay at home, and ſhe ſucceeded ſo far, as not only to prevail upon him to be abſent, but alſo to withdraw himſelf entirely from his allegiance.

At this very time, the king was informed by a faithful ſervant, a nobleman of Hadea, that the chief of Gadai had long been meditating miſchief, and endeavouring to prevail with the king of Adel to march with his army, while great part of the principal people of Hadea, whom he had ſeduced, were to fall, on the oppoſite ſide, upon Dawaro and Bali.

The king, however, received certain accounts from Adel, that all was quiet there; and inquiring who

who of his Mooriſh ſervants were of the conſpiracy in Hadea, he found them to be Goodalu, Alarea, Ditho, Hybo, Ganzè, Saag, Gidibo, Kibben, Gugulé, and Haleb. As there were ſtill forces enough in the province to reſiſt this confederacy, the king, inſtead of levying an army againſt them, thought the proper way was to ſend them a governor, who ſhould divide the intereſt and ſtrength of the enemy. There was then an uncle of Mihico remaining in exile at Dejan *, whither he had been ſent formerly into baniſhment at the inſtance of his nephew, but he ſtill preſerved the command of a ſmall diſtrict called Bomo, as well as the good inclinations of his own ſubjects of Gadai, who held his memory in great veneration. The king, therefore, ſent for this governor of Bomo, and, ſetting before him the behaviour of his nephew, he gave him the inveſtiture of his government, with many preſents both uſeful and honourable; and, having ordered ſome troops from Amhara to attend him, he diſmiſſed him, to puniſh and expel his nephew from the province of Gadai.

The fair of Adel was nigh, and thither all the inhabitants of Bali and Dawaro go. It was at this time the conſpirators of Hadea had agreed to fall upon the provinces; while, probably, thoſe at the fair had been likewiſe deſtined to cut off the inhabitants which might be found there. To counteract theſe deſigns, the king, by proclamation, expreſsly forbade any of the inhabitants of Bali or Dawaro to go to the fair, but all to join the gover-

nor

* One of the ſteep mountains uſed for priſons.

nor of Bomo, who no ſooner preſented himſelf in his diſtrict, than the people of all ranks flocked to him and ſubmitted.

Mihico ſaw himſelf undone by this addreſs of the king, of which he was quite uninformed. He fled immediately with his family, endeavouring, if poſſible, to reach Adel; and having come the length of Bawa Amba, a high mountain, where is one of the narroweſt and moſt difficult paſſes between the high country and the Kolla, here he ſtrowed about, in different places, all the riches that he had brought along with him, in hopes that his purſuers, wearied by the time they came there, ſhould, by the difficulty of the ground, and the booty everywhere to be found, be induced to proceed no further. But this ſtratagem did not ſucceed; for he was ſo cloſely followed that he was overtaken and ſlain, his head, hands, and feet were cut off, and immediately ſent to the king, who, after public rejoicings, gave the government of Gadai to the perſon who firſt informed him of Mihico's conſpiracy, and confirmed the governor of Bomo in the province of Hadea likewiſe, which he made hereditary in his family. In order alſo to be more in readineſs to ſuppreſs ſuch inſurrections for the future, he gave his Chriſtian ſoldiers lands adjacent to each other, forming a line all along the frontiers of the Mahometan provinces of Bali, Fatigar, Wadge, and Hadea, that they might be ready at an inſtant to ſuppreſs any tumult in the provinces themſelves, or reſiſt any incurſions from the kingdom of Adel.

The king now ſet about fulfilling another duty of his reign, that of repairing the ſeveral churches in Abyſſinia

Abyſſinia which had been deſtroyed in the late war by the Mahometans, and of building new ones, which it is their conſtant cuſtom to vow and to erect where victories had been obtained over an infidel enemy. While thus employed, news were ſent him from the patriarch of Alexandria, that the church of the virgin had been deſtroyed at that city by fire. Full, therefore, of grief for this misfortune, he immediately founded another in Abyſſinia, to repair that loſs which Chriſtianity had ſuffered in Egypt.

Being now advanced in life, he would willingly have dedicated the remainder of it to theſe purpoſes, when he was awakened from his religious employments by an alarm of war. The rebels of Hadea, by changing their chief, had not altered their diſpoſitions to rebel, and, ſeeing the king given to other purſuits, they began to aſſociate and to arm. The governor, whom the king had created after the death of Mihico, gave the king a very late notice of this, which he diſſembled, as he was queen Helena's father: but having, under pretence of conſecrating the church of St. Cyriacos, aſſembled a ſufficient number of men whom he could truſt, he made a ſudden irruption into the rebel provinces before they had united their forces. The firſt that the king met to oppoſe him was an officer of the rebel governor of Fatigar, who imagined he was engaging only the van of a ſeparate body of Zara Jacob's troops, not believing him to be yet come up in perſon with ſo ſmall a number: But being undeceived, he beſtirred himſelf ſo courageouſly, that he reached the king's perſon, and broke his lance upon

upon him; but, in return, received a blow from the lance of the king which threw him to the ground; at the ſight of which his whole party took flight, but were overtaken and put to the ſword almoſt to a man; nor was the king's loſs conſiderable, his number being ſo ſmall.

Upon this defeat, Hiradin, the governor's brother, declared his revolt, and advanced to fight the king at the paſſage of the river Hawaſh. Zara Jacob, much offended at this freſh delinquency, ſent an officer, called Han Degna, who found him at the watering-place unſuſpecting an enemy; and, before he could put his army in order, he was ſurrounded, ſlain, and his head ſent to the king, who rejoiced much at the ſight, it being brought him on Chriſtmas day.

After this the king collected his dead, and buried them with great honour and ſhew of grief. He then ſummoned the governor of Hadea, who profeſſed himſelf willing to ſubmit his loyalty and conduct to the ſtricteſt inquiry. Above all the reaſons which hindered him from attending the king, one was known to be, that the queen was not without reaſon ſuſpected to favour the Mahometants, being originally of that faith herſelf, and, therefore, for fear of revealing his ſecret to the enemy, the king did not chooſe to make her father, the governor of Hadea, partaker in his expedition, but, from jealouſy to the queen, ordered him to ſtay at home. Notwithſtanding which it was found, that all in his government were in their allegiance, and ready to march upon the ſhorteſt notice had the king required

quired it; therefore he extended his command over the conquered provinces, in room of the rebel governors whom he had removed.

## BÆDA MARIAM.

From 1468 to 1478.

*Revives the Baniſhment of Princes to the Mountain—War with Adel—Death of the King—Attempts by Portugal to diſcover Abyſſinia and the Indies.*

BÆDA MARIAM ſucceeded to the throne (as his hiſtorian ſays) againſt his father's inclination, after having received much ill uſage during the earlier part of his life, of which this was the occaſion. His mother took ſo violent and irregular a longing to ſee her ſon king, that ſhe formed a ſcheme, by the ſtrength of a party of her relations and friends, truſting to the weakneſs of an old man, to force him into a partnerſhip with his father. Examples of two kings, at the ſame time, and even in this degree of relation, were more than once to be found in the Abyſſinian annals, but thoſe times were now no more. A ſtrong jealouſy had ſucceeded to an unreaſonable confidence, and had thrown both the perſon and pretenſions of the heirs-apparent of this age to as great a diſtance as was poſſible.

The queen, whoſe name was Sion Magaſs, or the Grace of Sion, firſt began to tamper with the clergy, who, though they did not abſolutely join her

her in her views, ſhewed her, however, more encouragement than was ſtrictly conſiſtent with their allegiance. From theſe ſhe applied to ſome of the principal officers of ſtate, and to thoſe about the king, the beſt affected to her ſon and his ſucceſſion. Theſe, aware of the evil tendency of her ſcheme, firſt adviſed her, by every means, to lay it aſide; and afterwards, ſeeing ſhe ſtill perſiſted, and afraid of a diſcovery that would involve her accomplices in it, they diſcloſed the matter to the king himſelf, who reſented the intention ſo heinouſly, that he ordered the queen to be beaten with rods till ſhe expired. Her body afterwards was privately buried in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, not far from Debra Berhan *.

Nothing had hitherto appeared to criminate the young prince. But it was ſoon told the king, that, after the death of the queen, her ſon Bæda Mariam had taken frankincenſe and wax-tapers from the churches, which he employed, at ſtated times, in the obſervation of the uſual ſolemnities over his mother's grave. The king, having called his ſon before him, began to queſtion him about what he had heard; while the prince, without heſitation, gave him a full account of every circumſtance, glorying in what, he ſaid, was his duty, and denying that he was accountable to any man on earth for the marks of affection which he ſhewed to his mother.

The king, conſidering his ſon's juſtification as a reproach made to himſelf for cruelty, ordered the



* Another church on a hill, one of the quarters of Gondar. It ſignifies the Hill of Glory, or Brightneſs.

prince, and, with him, his principal friend Meherata Chriſtos, to be loaded with irons, and baniſhed to the top of a mountain; and it is hard to ſay where this puniſhment would have ended, had not the monks of Debra Koſſo and Debra Libanos, and all thoſe of the deſert, (who thought themſelves in ſome meaſure accomplices with his mother), by exhortations, pretended prophecies, dreams and viſions, convinced the king, that Providence had decreed unalterably, that none but his ſon, Bæda Mariam, ſhould ſucceed him. To this ordinance the old king bowed, as it gave him a proſpect of the long continuance of his family on the throne of Abyſſinia.

Zara Jacob was no ſooner dead, that his ſon, Bæda Mariam, who ſucceeded him, began to apply himſelf ſeriouſly to the affairs of government. From the reign of Judith, (in the tenth century), when ſo many of the princes of the royal family were maſſacred, the cuſtom of ſending the royal children to confinement on the top of a mountain had been diſcontinued. Theſe children all lived at home with their reſpective fathers and mothers, like private perſons; and the kings ſeemed to connive at aboliſhing their former practice, for no mountain had been yet choſen as a ſubſtitute to the unfortunate Damo. The diſagreement between Zara Jacob and his queen, with the cauſe of it, and the prince's frankneſs and reſolution, ſeemed to point out the neceſſity of reviving the ſalutary ſeverity of the ancient laws. Bæda Mariam gave orders, therefore, to arreſt all his brethren, and ſend them priſoners for life to the high mountain of *Geſhen*,

on

on the confines of Amhara and Begemder, which ever after continued the ſtate-priſon for the royal children, till a ſlaughter, like to that made upon mount Damo, was the occaſion, as we ſhall ſee, of deſerting Geſhen likewiſe.

The king applied himſelf next to meaſures for the better government of his country. He ordered a general pardon to be proclaimed to all who, by the ſeverity of the late reign, lay under ſentence of death, baniſhment, or any other puniſhment; and, convoking the ſtates of the kingdom, he met them with a cheerfulneſs and openneſs which inſpired confidence into every rank, while, at the ſame time, he filled all the places he found vacant, or that he thought proper to change, with men of the greateſt integrity. He then reviewed the whole cavalry that were in his ſervice, which he diſtributed into bodies, and ſtationed them in places where they could be readieſt called, to execute thoſe deſigns he had then in contemplation.

The next year the king went to Debra Libanos in Shoa. It was, however, obſerved, that his preparations were not ſuch as were uſual in theſe ſhort journies, nor ſuch as were made in peaceable times. On the contrary, orders were ſent to the borders of Tigré to receive the royal army, which was ſoon to arrive in thoſe parts. The rumour of this was quickly ſpread abroad, and affected all the neighbouring ſtates, according to their ſeveral intereſts. Mahomet king of Adel was the firſt that took the alarm. Tho' a kind of peace had ſubſiſted for ſeveral years between Adel and Abyſſinia, yet inroads had been made from each country into the other;

and theſe might have ſerved them as pretexts for war, had that been the inclination of the times. Yet, as both countries happened to be diſpoſed for peace, theſe outrages paſſed unnoticed.

But, to prevent ſurpriſe upon this laſt movement of the troops, the king of Adel thought he had a right to be informed of Bæda Mariam's intentions, and, with this view, he ſent ſome of the principal people of his country as ambaſſadors, under pretext of congratulating the king upon his acceſſion to the throne. They met the king in Shoa, and had carried with them very conſiderable preſents. They were received in a very diſtinguiſhed manner; and the preſents which Bæda Mariam returned to the king of Adel were nothing inferior to thoſe he accepted. After having entertained the ambaſſadors ſeveral days with feaſting and diverſions, he confirmed a peace under the ſame duties upon trade that had formerly ſubſiſted.

The king of Dancali alſo, old, infirm, yet conſtant in his attachment to the Abyſſinians, was not without his inquietudes, though he was not afraid they intended to attack his poor territory with an army. He dreaded leſt the army in its march ſhould drink up that little quantity of water which remained to him in ſummer, and, without which, his kingdom would become uninhabited. It is a low, ſandy diſtrict, lying on the Red Sea, juſt where the coaſt, after bearing a little to the eaſt of north from Suez to Dancali, makes an elbow, and ſtretches nearly eaſt, as far as the Straits of Babelmandeb. It has the mines of foſſile-ſalt immediately on the north and north-weſt, a deſert part of the province

of

of Dawaro to the ſouth, and the ſea on the north. But it has no port, excepting a ſpacious bay, with tolerable anchorage, called *the Bay of Bilur* *, in lat. 13° 3′, and, corruptly in vulgar maps and writings, the Bay of Bayloul.

The kingdom of Dancali is bounded on the eaſt at Azab by part of the kingdom of Adel, and the myrrh country. The king is a Mahometan, as are all his ſubjects. They are called Taltal, are all black, and only ſome of them woolly-headed; a circumſtance which probably ariſes from a mixture with the Abyſſinians, whoſe hair is long. There are but two ſmall rivers of freſh water in the whole kingdom; and even theſe are not viſible above ground in the hot ſeaſon, but are ſwallowed up in the ſand, ſo as to be dug for when water is wanted.

In the rainy ſeaſon, theſe are ſwollen by rain falling from the ſides of the mountains and from the high lands of Abyſſinia, and then only they run with a current into the ſea. All the reſt of the water in this country is ſalt, or brackiſh, and not fit for uſe, unleſs in abſolute neceſſity or dry years. Even theſe ſometimes fail, and they are obliged to ſeek, far off in the rainy frontiers of Abyſſinia, water for themſelves, and paſture for their miſerable goats and ſheep.

When the Indian trade flouriſhed, this prince's revenue aroſe chiefly from furniſhing camels for the tranſport

* Bilur, in the language of Samhar, ſignifies *foſſile ſalt*; if it is coloured with any mineral, ſo as to be either red or green, it is, in this latter caſe, applied often to emeralds, and green rock cryſtal.

tranſport of merchandiſe to all parts of Africa. Their commerce is now confined to the carrying bricks of ſolid, or foſſile ſalt, dug from pits in their own country, which, in Abyſſinia, paſs inſtead of ſilver currency; theſe they deliver at the neareſt market in the high lands at a very moderate profit, after having carried them from the ſea-ſide through the dry and burning deſerts of their own country, at the great riſk of being murdered by Galla.

The preſents ſent to Bæda Mariam from Dancali did not make a great figure when compared with thoſe of Adel. They conſiſted of one horſe, a mule, a ſhield of elephant's hide, a poiſoned lance, two ſwords, and ſome dates. Poor as theſe preſents were, they were much more reſpected than thoſe of Adel, becauſe they came from a loyal hert; while the others were from a nation diſtinguiſhed every year by ſome premeditated action of treachery and bloodſhed. The king having firſt ſent for the Abuna, Imaranha Chriſtos, and called the ambaſſadors of Dancali and Adel into his preſence, declared to them, that neither of theſe ſtates was to be the ſcene of war, but that he was inſtantly to march againſt the Dobas *, whoſe conſtant inroads into his country, and repeated cruelties, he was reſolved no longer to ſuffer. He required the ambaſſadors to warn their maſters to keep a ſtrict neutrality, otherwiſe they would be infallibly involved in the ſame calamities with that nation.

Lent

* A race of very barbarous people, all ſhepherds, having great ſubſtance, and much reſembling the nations of Galla. They are Pagans.

Lent being now near, the king returned to Ifras, there to keep his faſt, and diſtributed his horſe on the ſide of Ambaſanet, having ſent orders to the governor of Amhara to join him immediately, who was then at Salamat beſieging a party of rebels upon Mount Gehud, which ſignifies the *Mountain of Manifeſtation*. It was the intention of the king, that the troops of Amhara, Angot, and Tigré ſhould preſs upon the enemy from the high country, while he with his own troops (chiefly horſe) ſhould cut off their retreat to the plains of ſalt; and it was here that the king of Dancali was afraid that they would interfere with his freſh water.

This prince kept ſtrictly his promiſe of ſecrecy made to Bæda Mariam, while the king of Adel obſerved a very different line of conduct; for he not only diſcovered the king's intention, but he invited the Dobas to ſend their wives, children, and effects into Adel, while his troops ſhould cut off the king's proviſion, and fight him wherever they ſaw that it could be done with advantage. The plan was ſpeedily embraced. Twelve clans of Dobas marched with their cattle, as privately as poſſible, for Adel; but the king's intelligence was too good, and his motions too rapid, to allow their ſchemes to be carried into execution. With a large body of horſe, he took poſſeſſion of a ſtrong paſs, called Fendera; and when that unhappy people, fatigued with their march, and incumbered with baggage, arrived at this ſpot, they were cut to pieces without reſiſtance, and without diſtinction of age or ſex.

The king, at the beginning of this campaign, declared, that his intention was not to carry on

war

war with the Dobas as with an ordinary enemy; but totally to extirpate them as a nuiſance; and, to ſhew himſelf in earneſt in the declaration, he now made a vow never to depart from the country till he had plowed and ſown the fields, and ate the crop on the ſpot with his army. He, therefore, called the peaſants of two ſmall neighbouring diſtricts, Wadge and Ganz, and ordered them to plow and ſow that part; which having ſeen done, the king went to Axum, but returned again to the Dobas, by the feaſt of the Epiphany. That cruel, reſtleſs nation, ſaw now the king's real intent was their utter deſtruction, and that there was no poſſibility of avoiding it but by ſubmiſſion. This prudent conduct they immediately adopted; and, great part of them renouncing the Pagan religion, they ſo ſatisfied Bæda Mariam that he decamped from their country, after having, at his own expence, reſtored to them a number of cattle equal to that which he had taken away, having alſo given up, untouched, the crop which had been ſown, and recompenſed the peaſants of Wadge and Ganz for their corn and labour.

Having reſolved to chaſtiſe the king of Adel for his treacherous conduct, he retired ſouthward into the provinces Dawaro and Ifat; and, as if he had had no other views but thoſe of peace, he croſſed over to Begemder, where he directed the Abuna to meet him with his young ſon Iſcander, of whom his queen, Romana Werk *, had been lately delivered. From this he proceeded to Gojam, every where

* The pomegranate of gold.

where leaving orders with the proper officers to have their troops in readineſs againſt his return; and having delivered the young prince to Ambaſa David, governor of that province, he proceeded to Gimbota, a town lying on the banks of the Nile, which, in honour of his ſon's governor, he changed to David Haraſa *. Having thus ſettled the prince to his mind, he ſent orders to the army in Tigré and Dawaro to advance into the ſouthernmoſt frontier of Adel. He himſelf returned by the way he went to Gojam, and collecting the troops, and the nobility who flocked to him on that occaſion, he marched ſtraight for the ſame country.

Whilſt the king was occupied in theſe warlike preparations, a violent commotion aroſe among his clergy at home. In the reign of Zara Jacob, a number of ſtrangers, after the council of Florence, had come into Abyſſinia with the Abuna Imaranha Chriſtos. Among theſe were ſome monks from Syria, or Egypt, who had propagated a hereſy which had found many diſciples. They denied the conſubſtantiality of Chriſt, whom they admitted to be perfect God and likewiſe perfect man, but maintained that what we call his *humanity* was a precious ſubſtance, or nature, not compoſed of fleſh, blood, and arteries (like ours), but infinitely more noble, perfect, peculiar to, and only exiſting in himſelf. An aſſembly of the clergy was called, this hereſy condemned, and thoſe who had denied the perfect manhood of our Saviour were put to death by different kinds of torture. Some were ſent to die

* The ſtation of David.

die in the Kolla, others expoſed, without the neceſſaries of life, to periſh with cold on the tops of the higheſt mountains.

There was another motive of diſcontent which appeared in that aſſembly, and which affected the king himſelf. A Venetian, whoſe name was Branca Leon, was one of the ſtrangers that arrived in Ethiopia at the time above mentioned. He was a limner by profeſſion, and exceedingly favoured by the late king, for whom he had painted, with great applauſe, the pictures of Abyſſinian ſaints for the decoration of the churches. It happened that this man was employed for an altar-piece of Atronſa Mariam; the ſubject was a common one in Italy, Chriſt in his mother's arms; where the child according to the Italian mode, is held in his mother's left arm. This is directly contrary to the uſage of the Eaſt, where the left hand is reſerved for the purpoſe of waſhing the body when needful, and is therefore looked upon with diſhonour, ſo much, indeed, that at table the right hand only is put into the plate.

The fanatic and ignorant monks, heated with the laſt diſpute, were fired with rage at the indignity which they ſuppoſed was offered to our Saviour. But the king, ſtruck with the beauty of the picture, and thinking blood enough had been already ſhed upon religious ſcruples, was reſolved to humour the ſpirit of perſecution no farther. Some of the ringleaders of theſe diſturbances privately diſappearing, the reſt ſaw the neceſſity of returning to their duty; and the picture was placed on the altar of Atronſa Mariam, and there preſerved, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the devaſtation of the country by the Moors under the reigns of David III. and Claudius; till many years afterwards, together with the church; it was deſtroyed by an inroad of the Galla.

In the mean time, the army from Dawaro had entered the kingdom of Adel under Betwudet * Adber Yaſous, and expecting to find the Moors quite unprepared, they had begun to waſte every thing with fire and ſword. But it was not long before they found the inhabitants of Adel ready to receive them, and perfectly inſtructed of the king's intentions, from the moment he left Dawaro, to go to meet his ſon in Gojam. Indeed, it could not be otherwiſe, from the multitude of Moors conſtantly in his army, who, though they put on the appearance of loyalty, never ceaſed to have a warm heart towards their own religion and countrymen. Advanced parties appeared as ſoon as the Abyſſinian army entered the frontiers; and theſe were followed by the main body in good order, determined to fight their enemy before they had time to ravage the country.

A battle immediately followed, very bloody, as might be expected from the mutual hatred of the ſoldiers, from the equality in numbers, and the long experience each had in the other's manner of fighting. The battle, often on the point of being loſt, was as often retrieved by the perſonal exertion of the Mooriſh officers, upon whom the loſs principally

* Betwudet is an officer that has nearly the ſame power as Ras; there were two of theſe, and both being ſlain at one battle, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel, the office grew into diſuſe as unfortunate.

cipally fell. Sidi Hamet, the king's ſon, the chiefs of Arar, Nagal, Telga, Adega, Hargai, Gadai, and Kumo, were ſlain, with ſeveral other principal men, who had either revolted from the king of Abyſſinia, or whom friendſhip to the king of Adel had brought from the oppoſite coaſt of Arabia.

The king was ſtill advancing with diligence, when he was overtaken by an expreſs, informing him that his queen Romana was delivered of another prince, chriſtened by the name of Anquo Iſrael. Upon which good tidings he halted at once to reſt and feaſt his army; and, in the middle of the feſtivity, an expreſs from Adber Yaſous, brought him news of the complete victory over the Moors, and that there was now no army in Adel of conſequence enough to keep the field. Hereupon the king detached a ſufficient number of troops to reinforce Adber Yaſous in Adel, and continued himſelf recruiting his army, and making greater preparations than before, that, during the firſt of the ſeaſon, he might utterly lay waſte the whole Mooriſh country, or ſo diſable them that they might, for many years, be content to enjoy peace under the condition of becoming his tributaries.

While planning theſe great enterpriſes, the king ſeized with a pain in his bowels, whether from poiſon or otherwiſe is not known, which occaſioned his death. Having, a few moments before he died, recollected that his face was turned on a different ſide from the kingdom of Adel, he ordered himſelf to be ſhifted in his bed, and placed ſo as to look directly towards it, (a token how much his heart was ſet upon its deſtruction) and in that poſture he expired.

He

He was a prince of great bravery and conduct; very moderate in all his pleaſures; of great devotion; zealous for the eſtabliſhed church, but ſteady in reſiſting the monks and other clergy in all their attempts towards perſecution, innovation, and independency. Many ſtories have been propagated of his inclination to the Catholic religion, and of his averſion to having an Abuna from Egypt; and it is ſaid, that, during his whole reign, he obſtinately perſiſted in refuſing to ſuffer any Abuna in his kingdom. But theſe are fables invented by the Portugueſe prieſts, who came into Abyſſinia ſome time afterwards, and forged anecdotes to ſerve their own purpoſes; for, unleſs we except the ſtory of the Venetian, Branca Leon, there is not a word ſaid of any connection Bæda Mariam ever had with the few Catholics that then were in his country, and even that was a connection of his father's. And as to the other ſtory, we find in hiſtory, that the Abuna had been in the country ever ſince his father Zara Jacob's time; and that, at his deſire, the Abuna, Imaranha Chriſtos, came and received, in the field of battle, large donations in gold, almoſt as often as the king gained a victory. Bæda Mariam died at the age of forty, after reigning ten years, which were ſpent in continual war; during the whole courſe of which he was ſucceſsful, and might (if he had lived) have very much weakened the Mooriſh ſtates, and prevented the terrible retaliation that fell afterwards from that quarter upon his country.—It will be proper now to look back into the tranſactions in Europe, which are partly connected with the hiſtory of this kingdom.

The

The conqueſt of the north part of Africa followed the reduction of Egypt, and the whole coaſt of Barbary was crowded with Mahometans, from Alexandria to the weſtern ocean, and from the Mediterranean to the edge of the deſert. Even the deſert itſelf was filled with them; and trade, ſecurity, and good faith, were now everywhere diſſeminated in regions, a few years before the ſeat of murder and pillage.

Tarik and his Moors had invaded Spain; Muſa followed him, and conquered it. The hiſtory of Count Julian is in every one's hand; unfortunate in having had the provocation, ſtill more ſo in having had the power to revenge it, by ſacrificing at once his ſovereign, his country, religion, and life, to the private injuries done to his daughter. As often as I have read the hiſtory of this cataſtrophe, ſo often have I regretted to ſee with how little ceremony this young lady had been treated by authors of all languages and nations. They call her *Caaba*, with the ſame eaſe and indifference as they would have called her Anne, or Margaret. This muſt be from mere ignorance. Caaba could not be the name of the daughter of Count Julian before her ſeduction. Caaba means *Harlot*, in the broadeſt way poſſible to expreſs the term, and very cruelly and improperly, it ſeems to be given her, even after her miſfortune; for ſhe was a daughter of the firſt family in Spain, of unexceptionable virtue. She was not ſeduced, but *forced* by the king, while in the palace, and under protection of the queen.

A great influx of trade followed the conqueſt; and the religion, that contained little reſtraint and

great

great indulgence, was every where embraced by the vanquiſhed, who long had been Chriſtians in name only. On the other ſide, the conquerors were now no longer that brutiſh ſet of madmen, ſuch as they were under the Khalifat of the fanatic Omar. They were now men eminent for their rank and attainments in every ſpecies of learning. This was a dangerous criſis for Chriſtianity, and nothing elſe was threatened than its total ſubverſion. The whole world, without the help of England, had not virtue enough to withſtand this torrent. That nation, the favourite weapon in the hand of Heaven for chaſtiſing tyranny and extirpating falſe religion, now lent its aſſiſtance, and the ſcale was quickly turned.

At that time Europe ſaw with ſurpriſe an inconſiderable number of fiſhermen, very inconveniently placed at the fartheſt end of the Adriatic Gulf, applying themſelves with unwearied care and patience to cultivate, gather together, and improve the remnants and gleanings of the Indian trade by Alexandria, under all the cruelties and oppreſſions of thoſe ignorant and barbarous conquerors the Turks, whom no proſpect of gain, no change of place, no frequency of commerce, could ever civilize or ſubject to the rules of juſtice. Venice became at once the great market for ſpices and perfumes, and conſequently the moſt conſiderable maritime power that had appeared in Europe for ages.

Genoa followed, but ſunk, after great efforts, under the power of her rival; while Venice remained miſtreſs of the ſea, of a large dominion upon

on the continent, and of the Indian ſpice trade, the origin and ſupport of all her greatneſs.

Rhodes, and the ſhips of the Military Order of St. John of Jeruſalem, to whom that iſland belonged, greatly haraſſed the maritime trade carried on by the Moors in their own veſſels from Alexandria, who were every day more diſcouraged by the unexpected progreſs of theſe *once petty* Chriſtian ſtates. Trade again began to be carried on by caravans in the deſert. Large companies of merchants from Arabia, paſſed in ſafety to the weſtern ocean, and were joined by other traders from the different parts of Barbary while paſſing to the ſouthward of them, and that with ſuch ſecurity and expedition, that the Moors began to ſet little value on their manner of trading by ſea, content now again with the labours and conveniencies of their ancient, faithful friend, and ſervant, the camel.

Ormus, a ſmall iſland in the Perſian Gulf, had, by its convenient ſituation, become the market for the ſpice trade, after the diſcouragements it had received in the Mediterranean. All Aſia was ſupplied from thence, and veſſels, entering the Straits of Babelmandeb, had renewed the old reſort to the temple of Mecca. From hence all Africa, too, was ſerved by caravans, that never ſince have forſaken that trade, but continue to this day, and croſs the continent, in various directions.

John I. king of Portugal, after many ſucceſsful battles with the Moors, had at laſt forced them to croſs the ſea, and return vanquiſhed to their native country. By this he had changed his former diſhonourable name of *baſtard* to the more noble and much

much more popular one of John the *avenger*. This did not ſatisfy him. Aſſiſted by ſome Engliſh navigators, he paſſed over to Barbary, laid ſiege to Ceuta, and ſpeedily after made himſelf maſter of the city. This early connection with the Engliſh aroſe by his having married Philipina of Lancaſter, ſiſter of Henry IV. king of England, by whom he had five ſons, all of them heroes, and, at the taking of Ceuta, capable of commanding armies. Henry, the youngeſt, ſcarce twenty years of age, was the firſt that mounted the walls of that city in his father's preſence, and was thereupon created Maſter of the Order of Chriſt, a new inſtitution, whoſe ſole end and view was the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

Although every thing promiſed fair to John in the war of Africa, yet it early occurred to prince Henry, that a ſmall kingdom like Portugal never could promiſe to do any thing effectual againſt the enormous power of the Mahometans, then in poſſeſſion of extenſive dominions in the richeſt parts of the globe. The ſudden riſe of Venice was before his eyes, and almoſt happened in his own time. By applying to trade alone, ſhe had acquired a power ſufficient to cope with the ſtouteſt of her enemies. Portugal, ſmall as it was, merited quite another degree of reſpect; but poverty, ignorance, pride, and idleneſs prevailed among the poor people; even agriculture itſelf was in a manner abandoned ſince the expulſion of the Moors.

Prince Henry, from his early years, had been paſſionately addicted to the ſtudy of what is generally known by the name of the *mathematics*, that

is, geometry, aſtronomy, and conſequently arithmetic. He was of a liberal turn of mind, devoid of ſuperſtition, haughtineſs, or paſſion; the Arab and the Jew were admitted to him with great freedom, as the only maſters who were capable of inſtructing him in thoſe ſciences. It was in vain to attempt to rival Venice in poſſeſſion of the Mediterranean trade: no other way remained but to open the commerce to India by the Atlantic Ocean, by ſailing round the point of Africa to the market of ſpices in India. Full of this thought, he retired to a country palace, and there dedicated the whole of his time to deliberate inquiry. The ignorance and prejudices of the age were altogether againſt him. The only geography then known was that of the poets. It was the opinion of the Portugueſe, that the regions within the tropics were totally uninhabited, ſcorched by eternal ſun-beams, while boiling oceans waſhed theſe burning coaſts; and, therefore, they concluded, that every attempt to explore them was little better than downright madneſs, and a braving, or tempting, of Providence.

But, on the other hand, he found great materials to comfort him, and to make him perſiſt in his reſolution. For Greek hiſtory, to which he then had acceſs, had recorded two inſtances, which ſhewed that the voyage was not only poſſible, but that it had been actually performed, firſt by the Phœnicians, under Necho king of Egypt, then by Eudoxus, during the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, who, after doubling the ſouthern Cape of Africa, arrived in ſafety at Cadiz. Hanno, too, had ſailed from Carthage through the Straits, and reached to 25° of north

north latitude in the Atlantic Ocean. In more modern times, even in the preceding century, Macham, an Engliſhman, returning from a voyage on the weſt coaſt of Africa, was ſhipwrecked on the iſland of Madeira, together with a woman whom he tenderly loved. After her death he became weary of ſolitude; and having conſtructed a bark, or canoe, with which he paddled over to the oppoſite coaſt, he was taken by the natives, and preſented to the Caliph as a curioſity. And the Normans of Dieppe had, as a company, traded in 1364, not fourſcore years from prince Henry's time, as far as Sierra de Leona, only 7° from the Line.

The prince's humanity to his Mooriſh priſoners had likewiſe been rewarded by ſubſtantial information; they reported that ſome of their countrymen of the kingdom of Sus had advanced far into the deſert, carrying their water and proviſions along with them on camels; that, after many days travel, they came to mines of ſalt, and, having loaded their cargoes, they proceeded till they came within the limits of the rains; there they found large and populous towns, inhabited by a people totally black and woolly-headed, who reported that there were many countries even beyond them, occupied by numerous and warlike tribes. To complete all, Don Pedro, Henry's brother, returning from Venice, brought along with him from that city a map, on which the whole coaſt of the Atlantic Ocean was diſtinctly traced, and the ſouthern extremity of Africa was repreſented to be a cape ſurrounded with the ſea, which joined with the Indian Ocean.

No ſooner was the prince thus ſatisfied of the poſſibility of a paſſage to India round Africa, than he ſet about conſtructing the neceſſary inſtruments for navigation. He corrected the ſolar tables of the Arabs, and made ſome alterations in the aſtrolabe: For, ſtrange to tell! the quadrant was not then known in Portugal, though, a hundred years before, Ulughbeg had meaſured the ſun's height at Samarc and in Perſia, with a quadrant of about 400 feet radius, the largeſt ever conſtructed, if, indeed, the ſize of this be not exaggerated.

Henry, who, by his liberality and affability, had drawn together the moſt learned mathematicians and ableſt pilots of the age, now propoſed to reduce his ſpeculations to practice. Many ſhips had failed in the courſe of his diſquiſitions, and ten years had now elapſed before the prince, after all his encouragement, could induce the captains to proceed farther than Cape Non, or, thirty leagues further, to Cape Bojador. To this their courage held good; after which, the fear of fiery oceans reviving in their minds, they returned exceedingly ſatisfied with their own perſeverance and abilities. Henry, though greatly hurt at this behaviour, diſſembled the low opinion which he had formed of both. He contented himſelf with propoſing to them different reaſons and rewards; and urged them to repeat their voyages, which, however, conſtantly ended in the ſame diſappointment. And it is probable a much longer time might have been ſpent in theſe miſcarriages, had not accident, or rather providence, ſtept in to his aſſiſtance.

John

John Gonſalez and Triſtan Vaz, two gentlemen of his bed-chamber, ſeeing the impreſſion this behaviour had made on the prince, and having obtained a ſmall ſhip from him, reſolved to double Cape Bojador, and diſcover the coaſt beyond it. Whether the fiery oceans might not have preſented themſelves to theſe gentlemen, I know not; but a violent ſtorm forced them to ſea. After being toſſed about in perpetual fear of ſhipwreck for ſeveral days, they at laſt landed on a ſmall iſland, which they called Port Santo. Theſe two navigators poſſeſſed the true ſpirit of diſcovery. Far from giving themſelves up for loſt in a new world, or content with what they had already done, they ſet about making the moſt diligent obſervation of every thing remarkable in this ſmall ſpot. The iſland itſelf was barren; but, examining the horizon all around, they obſerved a black fixed ſpot there, which never either changed its place or dimenſions. Satisfied, therefore, that this was land, they returned to the Infant with the news of this double diſcovery.

Three veſſels were ſpeedily equipped by the prince; two of them given to Vaz and Arco, and the third to Bartholomew Pereſtrello, gentleman of the bed-chamber to Don John his brother. Theſe adventurers were far from diſappointing his expectations; they arrived at Port Santo, and proceeded to the fixed ſpot, which they found to be the iſland of Madeira, wholly covered with wood; an iſland that has ever ſince been of the greateſt uſe to the trade of both Indies, and which has remained to the crown of Portugal, after the greateſt part of their other conqueſts in the eaſt are loſt. John I.

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was now dead, and Edward had ſucceeded him. The infant Henry, however, ſtill continued the purſuit of his diſcoveries with the greateſt ardour.

Giles D'Anez, ſtimulated by the ſucceſs of the laſt adventures, put to ſea with a reſolution to double Cape Bojador cloſe in ſhore, ſo as to make his voyage a foundation for puſhing farther the diſcovery; and, being lucky in good weather, he fairly doubled the Cape; and, continuing ſome leagues farther into the bay to the ſouth of it, he returned with the ſame good fortune to Portugal, after having found the ocean equally as navigable on the other ſide as on this; and that there was no foundation for thoſe monſtrous appearances or difficulties mariners till now had expected to find there.

The ſucceſsful expedition round Cape Bojador being ſoon ſpread abroad through Europe, excited a ſpirit of adventure in all foreigners; the moſt capable of whom reſorted immediately to prince Henry, from their different countries, which further increaſed the ſpirit of the Portugueſe, already raiſed to a very great height. But there ſtill was a party of men, who, not ſuſceptible of great actions themſelves, dedicated their time with ſome ſucceſs to criticiſing the enterpriſes of others. Theſe blamed prince Henry, becauſe, when Portugal was exhauſted both of men and money by a neceſſary war in Africa, he ſhould have choſen that very time to launch out into expences and vain diſcoveries of countries, in an immenſe ocean, which muſt be uſeleſs, becauſe incapable of cultivation. And though they did not advance, as formerly, that the ocean was boiling among burning ſands, they ſtill thought themſelves

themſelves authoriſed to aſſert, that theſe countries muſt, from their ſituation under the ſun, be ſo hot as to turn all the diſcoverers black, and alſo to deſtroy all vegetation. Futile as theſe reaſons were, at another time they would have been ſufficient to have blaſted all the deſigns of prince Henry, had they made half the impreſſion upon the king that they did upon the minds of the people. Portugal was then only *growing* to a pitch of heroiſm which it ſoon after arrived, their ſpirit being continually foſtered by a long ſucceſſion of wiſe, brave, and well-informed princes.

Edward, the reigning prince, diſdained to give any anſwer to ſuch objections, otherwiſe than by doubling his reſpect and attention for his uncle Henry. To encourage him ſtill further, he conferred upon him for life the ſovereignty of Madeira, Port Santo, and all the diſcoveries he ſhould make on the coaſt of Africa; and the ſpiritual juriſdiction of the iſland of Madeira, upon his new Order of Chriſt, for ever.

Theſe voyages of diſcovery were conſtantly perſevered in. Nugno Triſtan doubled Cape Blanco, and came to a ſmall river, which, from their finding gold in the hands of the natives, was afterwards called *Rio del Oro;* and here a fort was afterwards built by the Portugueſe, called *Arguim.* I would not, however, have it ſuppoſed, that gold is the produce of any place in the latitude of Cape Blanco. It was brought here from the black nations, far to the ſouthward, to purchaſe ſalt from the mines which are in this deſert near the Cape. The ſight of gold, better than any argument, ſerved to calm the fears,

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and overcome the ſcruples, of thoſe who hitherto had been adverſaries to theſe diſcoveries.

In the year 1445, Denis Fernandes firſt diſcovered the great river Senega, the northern banks of which are inhabited by Aſenagi Moors, whoſe colour is tawny, while the ſouthern, or oppoſite banks, belong to the Jaloffes, or Negro nation, the chief market for the gum-arabic. Paſſing this river he diſcovered Cape Verde; and, to his inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, though now in the midſt of the torrid zone, he found the country abounded with large rivers, and with the moſt luxuriant verdure. He found a civil war in the nation of Jaloffes. Bemoy, a prince of that nation, had, in a minority, intruded himſelf into the throne of his brothers, (to whom he was but half blood), by the addreſs of his mother. The eldeſt of the three brothers preſerved the ſhadow of government, and ſeemed to favour the uſurpation. Bemoy had improved that interval by cultivating the Portugueſe friendſhip to the uttermoſt. He promiſed every thing; a place to build their city on the continent, which the king very much deſired; and to be a convert to Chriſtianity, the only thing the king wiſhed ſtill more. His eldeſt brother dying, the king was briſkly preſſed by the two younger, and ſteadily ſupported by the Portugueſe, from whom he had borrowed large ſums; but ſtill appearing to trifle with the day of his converſion, and the day of his payment, the king ordered the Portugueſe to withdraw from his country, and leave him to his fortune. The loſs of a battle with his brothers ſoon reduced him to the neceſſity of flying acroſs the deſerts to Arguim, and thence

thence to Portugal, with a number of his followers. He was received by the king of Portugal with all the honours due to a ſovereign prince, and baptiſed at Liſbon, the king and queen being his ſponſors.

Great feſtivals and illuminations were made at this acquiſition to Chriſtianity; and Bemoy appeared at thoſe feſtivals as the greateſt ornament of them, performing feats of horſemanſhip never before practiſed in Portugal. The modeſty and propriety of his converſation and behaviour in private, and the great dignity and eloquence which he diſplayed in public, began to give the Portugueſe a very different idea of his clan from that which they had formerly entertained

In the mean time the king went rapidly on with the preparations that were to eſtabliſh Bemoy in his kingdom; and the feſtivals were no ſooner terminated, than Bemoy found a large army and fleet ready to ſail with him, the command of which, unhappily for him and the expedition, was given to Triſtan d'Acugna, a ſoldier of great experience and courage, but proud, paſſionate, and cruel; the diſagreeable name of Biſagudo * had already been fixed upon him by his countrymen.

The fleet performed the voyage, and the troops landed happily. They were, by their number and valour, far from any apprehenſion of oppoſition. The general began immediately to lay the foundation of a fort, without having ſufficiently attended to its unhealthy ſituation. The ſpot which was choſen being low and marſhy, fevers began early to

* The literal tranſlation of this is, *doubly ſharp*, or *ſharp to a fault*; a character he had gained in Portugal.

to make havock among his men, and the work of courſe went on proportionably ſlower. The murmurs of the army againſt his obſtinacy in adhering to the choice of this place, and his fear that he himſelf ſhould be left alone governor of it, made D'Acugna deſperate; when one day, taking his pleaſure on board a ſhip, and having had ſome words with Bemoy, he ſtabbed him with his dagger to the heart, ſo that he fell dead without uttering a word. The fort was abandoned, and the army returned to Portugal, after having coſt little leſs than all prince Henry's diſcoveries together had done.

But Heaven rewarded the wiſdom of the king by a diſcovery, the conſequences of which more than overpaid him, in his mind, for his loſs. Prince Henry's principal view was to diſcover the way to India by the ſouthern Cape of Africa; but this as yet was not known to be poſſible. In order to remedy a diſappointment, if any ſuch happened in this ſea-voyage, another was attempted by land. We have ſeen that the common track for the Indian trade was from the eaſt to the weſt ſea, through the deſert, the whole breadth of Africa. Prince Henry had projected a route parallel to this to the ſouthward, through a Chriſtian country: For it had been long reported by the Chriſtians from Jeruſalem, that a number of monks reſorted thither, ſubjects of a Chriſtian prince in the very heart of Africa, whoſe dominions were ſaid to reach from the eaſt to the weſt ſea. Several of theſe monks had been met at Alexandria, whoſe patriarch had the ſole right to ſend a metropolitan into that country. Theſe facts, though often known, had been as often forgot

forgot by the weſtern Chriſtians. Marco Paulo *, a Venetian traveller, had much confuſed the ſtory, by ſaying he had met, in his travels through Tartary, with this prince, who they all agreed was a prieſt, and was called Joannes Preſbyter Prete Janni, or Preſter John.

The king of Portugal, therefore, choſe Peter Covillan and Alphonſo de Paiva for his ambaſſadors. Covillan was a man qualified for the undertaking. He had ſeveral times been employed by the late king in very delicate affairs, out of which he extricated himſelf with the great credit by his addreſs and ſecrecy. He was, beſides this, in the vigour of his age, bold, active, and perfectly maſter of all ſorts of arms; modeſt and cheerful in converſation, and, what crowned all, had happily a great readineſs in acquiring languages, which enabled him to explain himſelf wherever he went, without an interpreter; an advantage to which, above all others, we are to aſcribe the ſucceſs of ſuch a journey.

It was at the court of Bemoy that the firſt certain account of the exiſtence of this Chriſtian prince was procured. This people, on the weſt coaſt of Africa, reported, that, inland to the eaſtward, were many powerful nations and cities, governed by princes totally independent of each other; that the eaſtermoſt of theſe princes was called prince of the Moſaical people, who were neither Pagans nor Idolaters, but profeſſed a religion compounded of the Chriſtian and Jewiſh.

It ſeems plain that this intelligence muſt have been brought by the caravans; or, indeed, the caſe may have been that the language of the Negroes had,

* See Marco Paulo's Travels into Tartary.

had, of old, been a dialect of Abyſſinian. The black Ethiopians above Thebes are reported to have beſtowed much care upon letters; and they certainly reformed the hieroglyphics, and probably invented the Syllabic alphabet, which we know is uſed in Abyſſinia to this day, and which was probably the firſt among the nations. Be that as it will, the various names which the Senega went by were all Abyſſinian words. Senega comes from Aſenagi, which is Abyſſinian, and ſignifies *carriers*, or *caravans*, Dengui, *a ſtone*, or *rock*; Angueah, a tree of that name; Anzo, *a crocodile*; and, at the ſame time, all theſe are names of Abyſſinian rivers.

It was at Benin, another Negro country, that the king again received a confirmation of the exiſtence of a Chriſtian prince, who was ſaid to inhabit the heart of Africa to the ſouth-eaſt of this ſtate. The people of Benin reported him to be a prince exceedingly powerful; that his name was Ogané, and his kingdom about 250 leagues to the eaſtward. They added, that the kings of Benin received from him a braſs croſs and a ſtaff as their inveſtiture. it ſhould ſeem that this Ogané is but a corruption of Jani, or Jahoi, which title the eaſtern Chriſtians had given to the king of Abyſſinia. But it is very difficult to account for the knowledge of Abyſſinia in the kingdom of Benin, not only on account of the diſtance, but likewiſe, becauſe ſeveral of the moſt ſavage nations of the world, the Galla and Shangalla, occupy the intervening ſpace.

The court of Abyſſinia, as we ſhall ſee afterwards, did, indeed, then reſide in Shoa, the ſouth-eaſt extremity of the kingdom, and, by its power

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and influence, probably might have puſhed its dominion through theſe barbarians, down to the neighbourhood of Benin on the weſtern ocean. But all this I muſt confeſs to be a ſimple conjecture of mine, of which, in the country itſelf, I never found the ſmalleſt confirmation.

Amha Yaſous (prince of Shoa) being at court, on a viſit to the king at Gondar, in the year 1770 and 1771, and the ſtricteſt friendſhip ſubſiſting between us, every endeavour poſſible was uſed on my part to examine this affair to the bottom. A number of letters were written, and meſſengers ſent; and, at this prince's deſire, his father directed, that all the records of government ſhould be conſulted to ſatisfy me. But never any thing occurred which gave room to imagine the prince of Shoa had ever been ſovereign of Benin, nor was the weſtern ocean, or that ſtate, known to them in my time. Yet the country alluded to could be no other than Abyſſinia; and, indeed, the crooked ſtaff, as well as the croſs, corroborate this opinion, unleſs the whole was an invention of the Negroes, to flatter the king of Portugal.

That prince was reſolved no longer to delay the diſcovery of the markets of the ſpice-trade in India, and the paſſage over land, through Abyſſinia, to the eaſtern ocean. He, therefore, as has been before ſaid, diſpatched Covillan and de Paiva to Alexandria, with the neceſſary letters and credit. They had likewiſe a map, or chart, given them, made under the direction of prince Henry, which they were to correct, or to confirm, according as it needed. They were to enquire what were the

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principal markets for the ſpice, and particularly the pepper-trade in India; and what were the different channels by which this was conveyed to Europe; whence came the gold and ſilver, the medium of this trade; and, above all, they were to inform themſelves diſtinctly, whether it was poſſible to arrive in India by ſailing round the ſouthern promontory of Africa.

From Alexandria theſe two travellers proceeded to Cairo, thence to Suez, the port on the bottom of the Red Sea, where joining a caravan of weſtern Moors, they continued their route to Aden, a rich trading town, without the Straits of Babelmandeb. Here they ſeparated: Covillan ſet ſail for India, De Paiva for Suakem, a ſmall trading town and iſland in Barbaria, or Barabra of the ancients. What other circumſtances occurred we know not, only that De Paiva, attempting his journey this way, loſt his life, and was never more heard of.

Covillan, more fortunate, paſſed over to Calicut and Goa in India; then croſſed the Indian Ocean to Sofala, to inſpect the mines; then he returned to Aden, and ſo to Cairo, where he expected to meet his companion De Paiva; but here he heard of his death. However, he was there met by two Jews with letters from the king of Abyſſinia, the one called Abraham, the other Joſeph. Abraham he ſent back with letters, but took Joſeph along with him again to Aden, and thence they both proceeded to Ormus in the Perſian Gulf. Here they ſeparated, and the Jew returned home by the caravans that paſs along the deſert to Aleppo. Covillan,

villan, now ſolely intent upon the diſcovery of Abyſſinia, returned to Aden, and, croſſing the Straits of Babelmandeb, landed in the dominions of that prince, whoſe name was Alexander, and whom he found at the head of his army, levying contributions upon his rebellious ſubjects. Alexander received him kindly, but rather from motives of curioſity than from any expectation of advantage which would reſult from his embaſſy. He took Covillan along with him to Shoa, where the court then reſided.

Covillan returned no more to Europe. A cruel policy of Abyſſinia makes this a favour conſtantly denied to ſtrangers. He married, and obtained large poſſeſſions; continued greatly in the favour of ſeveral ſucceeding princes, and was preferred to the principal offices, in which, there is no doubt, he appeared with all the advantage a poliſhed and inſtructed mind has over an ignorant and barbarous one. Frequent diſpatches from him came to the king of Portugal, who, on his part, ſpared no expence to keep open the correſpondence. In his journal, Covillan deſcribed the ſeveral ports in India which he had ſeen; the temper and diſpoſition of the princes; the ſituation and riches of the mines of Sofala: He reported that the country was very populous, full of cities both powerful and rich; and he exhorted the king to purſue, with unremitting vigour, the paſſage round Africa, which he declared to be attended with very little danger; and that the Cape itſelf was well known in India. He accompanied this deſcription with a chart, or map, which he had received from the hands of a

Moor

Moor in India, where the Cape, and cities all around the coaſt, were exactly repreſented.

Upon this intelligence the king fitted out three ſhips under Bartholomew Dias, who had orders to inquire after the king of Abyſſinia on the weſtern ocean. Dias paſſed on to lat. 24½ deg. ſouth, and there ſet up the arms of the king of Portugal in token of poſſeſſion. He then ſailed for the harbour of the Herdſmen, ſo called from the multitude of cows ſeen on land; and, as it ſhould ſeem, not knowing whither he was going, came to a river which he called *Del Infante*, from the captain's name that firſt diſcovered it, having, without dreaming of it, paſſed that formidable Cape, the object ſo much deſired by the Portugueſe. Here he was toſſed for many days by violent ſtorms as he came near land, being more and more in the courſe of variable winds, but, obſtinately perſiſting to diſcover the coaſt, he at laſt came within ſight of the Cape, which he called the *Cape of Tempeſts*, from the rough treatment his veſſel had met in her paſſage round it.

The great end was now obtained. Dias and his companions had really ſuffered much, and, upon their return, they did not fail to do ample juſtice to their own bravery and perſeverance; in doing this, they had conjured up ſo many ſtorms and dreadful ſights, that, all the remaining life of king John, there was no more talk but of this Cape: Only the king, to hinder a bad omen, inſtead of the Cape of Tempeſts, ordered it to be called the Cape of Good Hope.

Although

Although the diſcovery now was made, there were not wanting a conſiderable number of people of the greateſt conſequence who were for abandoning it altogether; one of their reaſons was curious and what, if their behaviour afterwards had not been beyond all inſtance heroic, would have led us to imagine their ſpirit of religion and conqueſt had both cooled ſince the days of prince Henry. They were afraid, leſt, after having diſcovered a paſſage to India, the depriving the Mooriſh ſtates of their revenues from the ſpice-trade, ſhould unite theſe powers to their deſtruction. Now, to deſtroy their revenues effectually, and therefore ruin their power, was the very motive which ſet prince Henry upon the diſcovery, as worthy the Grand Maſter of the Order of Chriſt; an order founded in the blood of unbelievers, and devoted particularly to the extirpation of the Mahometan religion.

Don Emmanuel, then king, having no ſuch apprehenſions, reſolved to abide the conſequences of a meaſure the moſt arduous ever undertaken by any nation, and which, though it had coſt a great deal of time and expence, had yet ſucceeded beyond their utmoſt expectations. It was not till after long deliberation that he fixed upon Vaſques de Gama, a man of the firſt diſtinction, remarkable for courage and great preſence of mind. Before his departure, the king put into his hands the journal of Peter Covillan, with his chart, and letters of credit to all the princes in India of whom he had obtained any knowledge.

The behaviour of Vaſques de Gama, at parting, was far from being characteriſtic of the ſol-

dier or great man: his proceſſions and tapers favoured much more of the oſtentatious devotion of a bigotted little-minded prieſt, and was much more calculated to depreſs the ſpirits of his ſoldiers, than to encourage them to the ſervice they were then about to do for their country. It ſerved only to revive in their minds the hardſhips that Dias had met off the Terrible Cape, and perſuade them there was in their expedition much more danger than glory. I would not be underſtood as meaning to condemn all acts of devotion before military expeditions, but would have them always ſhort, ordinary, and uniform. Every thing further inſpires in weak minds a ſenſe of danger, and makes them deſpond upon any ſerious appearance of difficulty.

July 4th, 1497, Vaſques, with his ſmall fleet, ſailed from Liſbon; and, as the art of navigation was conſiderably improved, he ſtood out to ſea till he had made the Canary Iſlands, and then thoſe of Cape de Verde, where he anchored, took in water and other refreſhments. After which he was four months ſtruggling with contrary winds and blowing weather, and at laſt obliged, through perfect fatigue, to run into a large bay called *St. Helena**, in lat. 32° 32′ ſouth. The inhabitants of this bay were black, of low ſtature, and their language not underſtood, though it afterwards was found to be the ſame with that of the Cape. They were cloathed with ſkins of antelopes, which abounded in the country, ſince known to be that of the Hottentots; their

* On the weſt ſide of the peninſula on the Atlantic.

their arms were the horns and bones of beaſts and fiſhes, for they had no knowledge of iron.

The Portugueſe were unacquainted with the trade-winds in thoſe ſouthern latitudes; and Vaſques had departed for India, in a moſt unfavourable ſeaſon of the year. The 16th of November they ſailed for the Cape with a ſouth-weſt wind; but that very day, the weather changing, a violent ſtorm came on, which continued increaſing; ſo, although on the 18th they diſcovered their long-deſired Cape, they did not dare or attempt to paſs it. Then it was ſeen how much ſtronger the impreſſions were that Dias had left imprinted in their minds, than thoſe of duty, obedience, and reſignation, which they had ſo pompouſly vowed at the chapel, or hermitage. All the crew mutinied, and refuſed to paſs farther; and it was not the common ſailors only; the pilots and maſters were at their head. Vaſques, ſatisfied in his mind that there was nothing extraordinary in the danger, perſevered to paſs the Cape in ſpite of all difficulties; and the officers, animated with the ſame ardour, ſeized the moſt mutinous of their maſters and pilots, and confined them cloſe below in heavy irons.

Vaſques himſelf, taking hold of the rudder, continued to ſteer the ſhip with his own hand, and ſtood out to ſea, to the aſtoniſhment of the braveſt ſeaman on board. The ſtorm laſted two days, without having in the leaſt ſhaken the reſolution of the admiral, who, on the 20th of November, ſaw his conſtancy rewarded by doubling that Cape, which he did, as it were, in triumph, ſounding his trumpets, beating his drums, and permitting to his peo-

ple all ſorts of paſtimes which might baniſh from their minds former apprehenſions, and induce them to agree with him, that the point had very aptly been called the Cape of Good Hope.

On the 25th they anchored in a creek called *Angra de Saint Blaze*. Soon after their arrival there appeared a number of the inhabitants on the mountains, and on the ſhore. The general, fearing ſome ſurpriſe, landed his men armed. But, firſt, he ordered ſmall braſs bells, and other trinkets, to be thrown out of the boats on ſhore, which the blacks greedily took up, and ventured ſo near as to take one of them out of the general's own hand. Upon his landing, he was welcomed with the ſound of flutes and ſinging. Vaſques, on his part, ordered his trumpets to ſound, and his men to dance round them.

All along from St. Blaze, for more than ſixty leagues, they found the coaſt remarkably pleaſant, full of high and fair trees. On Chriſtmas day they made land, and entered a river which they called *the river of the kings*; and all the diſtance between this and St. Blaze they named *Terra de Natal*. The weather being mild, they took to their boats to row along the ſhore, on which were obſerved both men and women of a large ſtature, but who ſeemed to be of quiet and civil behaviour. The general ordered Martin Alonzo, who ſpoke ſeveral languages of the Negroes, to land; and he was ſo well received by the chief, or king, that the admiral ſent him ſeveral trifles, with which he was wonderfully pleaſed, and offered, in return, any thing he wanted of the produce of his country.

On

On the 15th of January, in the year 1498, having taken in plenty of water, which the Negroes, of their own accord, helped them to put on board, they left this civil nation, ſteering paſt a length of coaſt terminated by a Cape called the *Cape of Currents*. There the coaſt of Natal ends, and that of Sofala begins, to the northward of the Cape. At this place, Gama from the ſouth joined Covillan's track from the north, and theſe two Portugueſe had completely made the circuit of Africa.

## ISCANDER OR ALEXANDER.

From 1478 to 1495.

*Iſcander declares War with Adel—Good Conduct of the King—Betrayed and murdered by Za Saluce.*

AS ſoon as the king Bæda Mariam was dead, the hiſtory of Abyſſinia informs us, that a tumultuous meeting of the nobles brought from the mountain of Geſhen the queen Romana, with her ſon Iſcander, who upon his arrival was crowned without any oppoſition.

It is to be obſerved in the Abyſſinian annals, that very frequent minorities happen. A queen-mother, or regent, with two or three of the greateſt intereſt at court, are, during the minority, in poſſeſſion of the king's perſon, and govern in his name. The tranſactions of this minority, too, are as carefully inſerted in the annals of the kingdom as any other

part

part of the ſubſequent government, but as the whole of theſe minorities are but one continued chain of quarrels, plots, and treachery, as ſoon as the king comes of age, the greateſt part of this reign of his miniſters is cancelled, as being the acts of ſubjects, and not worthy to be inſerted in their hiſtories; which they entitle *Kebra Ze Neguſt*, the greatneſs or atchievements of their kings. This, however political in itſelf, is a great diſadvantage to hiſtory, by concealing from poſterity the firſt cauſe of the moſt important tranſactions.

For ſeveral years after Iſcander aſcended the throne, the queen his mother, together with the Acab Saat, Teſfo Georgis, and Betwudet Amdu, governed the kingdom deſpotically under the name of the young king. Accordingly, after ſome years ſufferance, a conſpiracy was formed, at the head of which were two men of great power, Abba, Amdu and Abba Haſabo, but the conſpirators proving unſucceſsful, ſome of them were impriſoned, ſome put to death, and others baniſhed to unwholeſome places, there to periſh with hunger and fevers.

The king from his early age had ſhewn a paſſionate deſire for a war with Adel, and that prince, whoſe country had been ſo often deſolated by the Abyſſinian armies, omitted no opportunity of creating an intereſt at that court, that ſhould keep things in a quiet ſtate. In this, however, he was much interrupted at preſent by a neighbouring chief of Arar, named Maffudi. This man, exceedingly brave, capable of enduring the greateſt hardſhips, and a very great bigot to the Mahometan religion, had made a vow, that, every

Lent,

Lent, he would ſpend the whole forty days in ſome part of the Abyſſinian kingdom; and to this purpoſe he had raiſed, at his own expence, a ſmall body of veteran troops, whom he inſpired with the ſame ſpirit and reſolution. Sometimes he fell on one part of the frontier, ſometimes upon another; flaying, without mercy, all that made reſiſtance, and driving off whole villages of men, women, and children, whom he ſent into Arabia, or India, to be ſold as ſlaves.

It was a matter of great difficulty for the king of Adel to perſuade the Abyſſinians that Maſſudi acted without his inſtigation. The young king was one who could not diſtinguiſh Adel from Arar, or Mahomet's army from Maſſudi's. He bore with very great impatience the exceſſes every year committed by the latter; but he was over-ruled by his nobility at home, and his thoughts turned as much as poſſible to hunting, to which he willingly gave himſelf up; and, tho' but fifteen years of age, was the perſon, in all Abyſſinia, moſt dexterous at managing his arms. At laſt, being arrived at the age of ſeventeen, and returning from having obſerved a very ſucceſsful expedition made by Maſſudi againſt his territories, he ordered Za Saluce, his firſt miniſter, commander in chief, and governor of Amhara, to raiſe the whole forces to the ſouthward, while he himſelf collected the nobility in Angot and Tigre. With thoſe, as ſoon as the rainy ſeaſon was over, he deſcended into the kingdom of Adel.

The king of Adel had been forced into this war, yet, like a wiſe prince, he was not unprepared for it.

it. He had advanced directly towards the king, but had not paſſed his frontiers. Some inhabitants of a village called *Arno*, all Mahometans, but tributary to the king of Abyſſinia, had murdered the governor the king had ſet over them. Iſcander marched directly to deſtroy it, which he had no ſooner accompliſhed, than the Mooriſh army preſented itſelf. The battle was maintained obſtinately on both ſides, till the troops under Za Saluce withdrew in the heat of the engagement, leaving the king in the midſt of his enemies. This treaſon, however, ſeemed to have inſpired the ſmall army that remained with new courage, ſo that the day was as yet dubious, when Iſcander, being engaged in a narrow paſs, and ſeeing himſelf preſſed by a Moor who bore in his hand the green ſtandard of Mahomet, turned ſuddenly upon him, and ſlew him with a javelin; and, having wreſted the colours from him as he was falling, he, with the point of the ſpear that bore the enſign, ſtruck the king of Adel's ſon dead to the ground, which immediately cauſed the Moors to retreat.

The young prince was too prudent to follow this victory in the ſtate the army then was; for that of Adel, though it had retreated, did not diſperſe. Za Saluce was returning by long marches to Amhara, exciting all thoſe in his way to revolt; and it was high time, therefore, for the king to follow him. But, unequal as he was in ſtrength to the Moors, he could not reconcile it with his own honour to leave their army maſters of the field. He, therefore, firſt conſulted the principal officers of his troops, then harangued his men, which, the

hiſtorian

hiſtorian ſays, he did in the moſt pathetic and maſterly manner; ſo that, with one voice, they deſired inſtantly to be led to the Moors. The king is ſaid to have ranged his little army in a manner that aſtoniſhed the oldeſt officers. He then ſent a defiance to the Moors, by ſeveral priſoners whom he releaſed. They, however, more deſirous to keep him from ravaging the country than to fight another battle, continued quiet in their tents; and the king, after remaining on the field till near noon, drew off his troops in the preſence of his enemy, making a retreat which would not have been unworthy of the hero whoſe name he bore.

The king, in his return to Shoa, left his troops, which was the northern army, in the northern provinces, as he paſſed; ſo that he came to Shoa with a very ſmall retinue, hearing that Za Saluce had gone to Amhara. This traitor, however, had left his creatures behind him, after inſtructing them what they were to do. Accordingly, the ſecond day after Iſcander's arrival in Tegulat, the capital of Shoa, they ſet upon him, during the night, in a ſmall houſe in Aylo Median, and murdered him while he was ſleeping. They concealed his body for ſome days in a mill, but Taka Chriſtos, and ſome others of the king's friends, took up the corpſe and expoſed it to the people, who, with one accord, proclaimed Andreas, ſon of Iſcander, king; and Za Saluce and his adherents, traitors.

In the mean time, Za Saluce, far from finding the encouragement he expected in Amhara, was, upon his firſt appearance, ſet upon by the nobility of that province; and, being deſerted by his troops, he

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was taken priſoner; his eyes were put out, and, being mounted on an aſs, he was carried amidſt the curſes of the people through the provinces of Amhara and Shoa.

Iſcander was ſucceeded by his ſon Andreas, or Amda Sion, an infant, who reigned ſeven months only.

A wonderful confuſion ſeems to be introduced at this time into hiſtory, by the Portugueſe writers. Iſcander is ſaid to die in the 1490. He began, as they ſay, to reign in 1475, and this is confirmed by Ludolf; and, on all hands, it is allowed he reigned 17 years, which would have brought the laſt year of his reign to 1492. It ſeems alſo to be agreed by the generality of them, that Covillan ſaw and converſed with this prince, Iſcander, ſome time before his death: this he very well might have done, if that prince lived to the 1492, and Peter Covillan came into Abyſſinia in 1490, as Galvan ſays in his father's memoirs. But then Tellez informs us expreſsly, that Iſcander was dead ſix months before the arrival of Peter Covillan in that country: If Peter Covillan arrived ſix months after the death of Iſcander, it muſt have been in the end of his ſon's reign, Amda Sion, who was an infant, and reigned only ſeven months.

Alvarez omits this king, Amda Sion, altogether, and ſo does Tellez; and there is a heap of miſtakes here that ſhew theſe Portugueſe hiſtorians paid very little attention to the chronology of theſe reigns. They call Alexander the father of Naod, when he was really but his brother; and Helena, they ſay, was David's mother, when, in fact, ſhe was his grand-

grandmother, or rather his grandfather's wife; for Helena, who was Iteghé in the time of David III. had never either ſon or daughter. So that if I differ, as in fact I do, four years, or thereabout, in this account, I do not think in thoſe remote times, when the language and manner of accounting was ſo little known to theſe ſtrangers, that I, therefore ſhould reject my own account and ſervilely adopt theirs, and the more ſo, becauſe, as we ſhall ſee in its proper place, by the examination and compariſon made by help of an eclipſe of the ſun in the 13th year of Claudius's reign in the 1553, and counting from that downwards to my arrival in Abyſſinia, and backwards to Iſcander, that prince muſt have begun his reign in 1478, and reigning 17 years, did not die till the year 1495 and therefore muſt have ſeen Peter Covillan, and converſed with him, if he had arrived in Abyſſinia ſo early as the 1490.

## N A O D.

From 1495 to 1508.

*Wiſe Conduct of the King—Prepares for a War with the Moors—Concludes an honourable Peace with Adel.*

AFTER the unfortunate death of the young king Alexander, the people in general, wearied of minorities, unanimouſly choſe Naod for their king. He was Alexander's younger brother, the difference

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of ages being but one year, though he was not by the ſame mother, but by the king's ſecond wife Calliope. He was born at a town called Gabargué, the day the royal army was cut off in his father's time, when both the Betwudets periſhed. From this circumſtance, the Empreſs Helena and her party had uſed ſome underhand means to ſet him aſide as unfortunate, and in his place to put Anquo Iſrael, Bæda Mariam's youngeſt ſon, that they might govern him and the kingdom during his nonage. But Taka Chriſtos, their man of confidence, being, on his firſt declaration of ſuch intentions, cut off by the army in Dawaro, Naod was immediately proclaimed, and brought from the mountain of Geſhen.

Although Naod was in the prime of life, and vigorous both in body and mind, yet ſuch were the circumſtances of the kingdom at his acceſſion, that it ſeemed a taſk too arduous for any one man. The continual intrigues of the empreſs, the quantity of Mahometan gold which was circulating on every occaſion throughout the court, the little ſucceſs the army had in Adel, as alſo the treachery of Za Saluce, and the untimely end of the young prince, who ſeemed to promiſe a remedy to the misfortunes, had ſo diſunited the principal people in the government, that there did not ſeem a ſufficient number of men worthy of truſt to aſſiſt the king with their councils, or fill, with any degree of dignity, the places that were vacant.

Naod was no ſooner ſeated on the throne than he publiſhed a very general and comprehenſive amneſty. By proclamation he declared, " That any

" perſon

" perſon who ſhould upbraid another with being a " party in the misfortunes of paſt times, or ſay " that he had been privy to this or to that conſpi- " racy, or had been a favourite of the empreſs, or " a partizan of Za Saluce, or had received bribes " from the Moors, ſhould, without delay, be put " to death." This proclamation had the very beſt effect, as it quieted the mind of every guilty perſon when he ſaw the king, from whom he feared an inquiry, cutting off all poſſible means by which it could be procured againſt him. Andreas a monk, a man of quality, and of very great conſequence in that country, a relation of the king by his mother, having affected to talk lightly of the proclamation, the king ſent for him, and ordered the tip of his tongue to be cut off in his preſence. This man, whoſe fault ſeems only to have been in his tongue, and of whom a very great character is given, lived in the ſucceeding reign to give the king a very diſtinguiſhed proof of his attachment to his family, and love of his country.

Naod having thus prudently quieted diſturbances at home, turned his thoughts to the war with Maſſudi; for the king of Adel himſelf had made his peace through mediation of the empreſs Helena; and this king, more politic than Alexander his brother, was willing to diſſemble with the king of Adel, that he might fight his two adverſaries ſingly: He, therefore, prepared a ſmaller army than was uſual for the king to head, without ſuffering a Moor of any kind to ſerve in it.

It was known to a day when Maffudi was to enter upon his expeditions againſt Abyſſinia. For near thirty years he had begun to burn the churches, and drive off the people and cattle on the firſt day of Lent; and, as Lent advanced, he with his army penetrated farther up the country. The Abyſſinians are the ſtricteſt people in the world in keeping faſts. They are ſo auſtere that they taſte no ſort of animal food, nor butter, eggs, oil, or wine. They will not, though ever ſo thirſty, drink a cup of water till ſix o'clock in the evening, and then are contented, perhaps, with dry or ſour leaven bread, the beſt of them only making uſe of honey; by which means they become ſo weak as to be unable to bear any fatigue. This was Maffudi's reaſon for invading the country in Lent, at which time ſcarce a Chriſtian, through faſting, was able to bear arms.

Naod, like a wiſe prince who had gained the confidence of his army, would not carry with him any man who did not, for that time, live in the ſame free and full manner he was uſed to do in feſtivals. He himſelf ſet the example; and Andreas the monk, after taking upon himſelf a vow of a whole year's faſting for the ſucceſs of the army, declared to them, that there was more merit in ſaving one Chriſtian village from ſlavery and turning Mahometan, than in faſting their whole lives.

The king then marched againſt Maffudi; and having taken very ſtrong ground, as if afraid of his army's weakneſs, the Moors, contrary to advice of their leader, attacked the king's camp in the moſt careleſs and preſumptuous manner. They had no ſooner entered, however, by ways left open

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on purpoſe for them, than they found the king's army in order to receive them, and were ſo rudely attacked that moſt of thoſe who had penetrated into the camp were left dead upon the ſpot. The king continued the purſuit with his troops, retook all the priſoners and cattle which Maffudi was driving away, and advanced towards the frontiers of Adel, where ambaſſadors met him, hoping, on the part of the king, that his intention was not to violate the treaty of peace.

To this the king anſwered, That, ſo far from it, he would confirm the peace with him, but with this condition, that they muſt deliver up to him all the Abyſſinians that were to be found in their country taken by Maffudi in his laſt expedition, adding, that he would ſtay fifteen days there to expect his anſwer. The king of Adel, deſirous of peace, and not a little terrified at the diſaſter of Maffudi, hitherto reckoned invincible, gathered together all the ſlaves as ſoon as poſſible, and returned them to the king.

Naod having now, by his courage and prudence, freed himſelf from fear of a foreign war, returned home, and ſet himſelf like a wiſe prince to the reforming of the abuſes that prevailed everywhere among his people, and to the cultivation of the arts of peace. He died a natural death, after having reigned 13 years.

## DAVID III.

From 1508 to 1540.

*David, an Infant, ſucceeds—Queen ſends Matthew Ambaſſador to Portugal—David takes the Field—Defeat of the Moors—Arrival of an Embaſſy from Portugal—Diſaſtrous War with Adel.*

THE vigorous reign of Naod had at leaſt ſuſpended the fate of the whole empire; and, had it not been that they ſtill perſiſted in that ruinous and dangerous meaſure of following minority with minority, by the election of children to the throne, it is probable this kingdom would have eſcaped the greateſt part of thoſe diſmal calamities that fell upon it in the ſequel. But the Iteghé Helena, and the Abuna Marcos, (now become her creature) had intereſt enough, notwithſtanding the apparent neceſſities of the times, to place David ſon of Naod upon the throne, a child of eleven years old, that they might take upon themſelves the government of the kingdom; whereas Anquo Iſrael (third ſon of Bæda Mariam) was of an age proper to govern, and whom they would have preferred to Naod for the ſame reaſon, merely becauſe he was then a child.

Beſides the deſire of governing, another motive operated, which, however good in itſelf, was very criminal from the preſent circumſtances. A peace with Adel was what the empreſs Helena conſtantly deſired; for ſhe could not ſee with indifference the deſtruction

deſtruction of her own country, far leſs contribute to it. She was herſelf by origin a Moor, daughter of Mahomet, governor for the king in Dawaro; had been ſuſpected, ſo early as her huſband's time, of preferring the welfare of her own country to that of the kingdom of Abyſſinia.

This princeſs, perfectly informed of the intereſts of both nations, ſeems, in her whole conduct, to have acted upon the moſt judicious and ſenſible principles. She knew the country of Adel to be, by ſituation and intereſt, perfectly commercial; that part of Africa, the oppoſite Arabia, and the peninſula of the Indies, were but three partners joined in one trade; they mutually conſumed each others produce; they mutually contributed to export the joint produce of the three countries to diſtant parts of Europe, Aſia, and Africa; which three continents then conſtituted the whole known world. When Adel was at peace with Abyſſinia, then the latter became rich, from the gold, ivory, coffee, cattle, hides, and all manner of proviſion, procured by the former from every part of the mountainous tract above it. Trade flouriſhed and plenty followed it. The merchants carried every ſpecies of goods to the moſt diſtant provinces in ſafety, equally to the advantage of Abyſſinia and Adel. Theſe advantages, ſo ſenſibly felt, were maintained by bribery, and a conſtant circulation of Mahometan gold in the court of Abyſſinia; the kingdom, however, thus proſpered. A war with Adel, on the contrary, had its origin in a violent deſire of a barbarous people, ſuch as the Abyſſinians were, to put themſelves in poſſeſſion of riches

which their neighbours had gained by trade and induſtry.

She ſaw that, even in this the worſt of caſes, nothing utterly deſtructive could poſſibly happen to the Abyſſinians; in their inroads into that country, they plundered the markets and got, at the riſk of their lives, India ſtuffs of every kind, for which elſe they would have paid money. On the other hand, the people of Adel, when conquerors, acquired no ſtuffs, no manufactures, but the perſons of the Abyſſinians themſelves, whom they carried into ſlavery, and ſold in Arabia, and all parts of Aſia, at immenſe profits. Next to gold they are the moſt agreeable and valuable merchandiſe in every part of the eaſt; and theſe again, being chiefly the idle people who delighted in war, their abſence promoted the more deſirable event of peace.

In this ſtate we ſee that war was but another ſpecies of commerce between the two countries, though peace was the moſt eligible ſtate for them both; and this the empreſs Helena had conſtantly endeavoured to maintain, but could not ſucceed among a people fond of war, by any other means but by giving them a minor for their king, who was by the law of the land under her direction, as the country was, during his minority, under her regency.

Although this, the ordinary ſtate of the empreſs's politics, had hitherto anſwered well between the kingdoms, when no other parties were engaged, the introduction of a third power, and its influence, totally changed that ſyſtem. The Turks, an enemy

not

not yet known in any formidable line by the ſouthern part of Africa, or Aſia, now appeared under a form that made all thoſe ſouthern ſtates tremble.

Selim, emperor of Conſtantinople, had defeated Canſo el Gauri, Soldan of Egypt, and ſlain him in the field. After a ſecond battle he had taken Cairo, the capital of that country; and, under the ſpecious pretence of a violation of the law of nations, by Tomum Bey, the ſucceſſor, who was ſaid to have put his ambaſſadors to death, he had hanged that prince upon one of the principal gates of his own capital; and, by this execution, had totally deſtroyed the ſucceſſion of the Mamalukes. Sinan Baſha, the great general and miniſter of Selim, in a very few months over-ran all the peninſula of Arabia, to the verge of the Indian Ocean.

Theſe people, trained to war, Mahomet had inſpired with enthuſiaſm, and led them to the conqueſt of the Eaſt. Trade and luxury had, after that, diſarmed and reduced them to much the ſame ſituation as, in a former age, they had been found by Auguſtus Cæſar. Sinan Baſha, with a troop of veterans, had, by degrees extirpated the native princes of the country; thoſe that reſiſted, by force; and thoſe that ſubmitted to him, by treachery; and in their place, in every principal town, he had ſubſtituted Turkiſh officers of confidence, ſtrongly ſupported by troops of Janizaries, who knew no other government but martial law.

War had now changed its form entirely under theſe new conquerors. Muſkets, and large trains of artillery, were introduced againſt javelins, lances, and arrows, the only arms then known in Arabia,

and in the oppoſite continent of Abyſſinia. A large fleet, crowded with ſoldiers, and filled with military ſtores, the very name of which, as well as their deſtructive qualities, were till now unknown in theſe ſouthern regions, were employed by the Turks to extend their conqueſt to India, where, though by the ſuperior valour of the Portugueſe they were conſtantly diſappointed in their principal object, they nevertheleſs, in their paſſage outward and homeward, reinforced their ſeveral poſts in Arabia, from which they looked for aſſiſtance and protection, had any enemy placed himſelf in their way, or a ſtorm, or other unexpected misfortune, overtaken them in their return.

Theſe Janizaries lived upon the very bowels of commerce. They had, indeed, for a ſhew of protecting it, eſtabliſhed cuſtomhouſes in their various ports; but they ſoon made it appear, that the end propoſed by theſe was only to give them a more diſtinct knowledge who were the ſubjects from whom they could levy the moſt enormous extortions. Jidda, Zibid, and Mocha, the places of conſequence neareſt to Abyſſinia on the Arabian ſhore, Suakem, a ſea-port town on the very barriers of Abyſſinia, in the immediate way of their caravan to Cairo, on the African ſide, were each under the command of a Turkiſh baſha, and garriſoned by Turkiſh troops ſent thither from Conſtantinople by the emperors Selim and Soliman, his ſucceſſors.

The peaceable Arabian merchants, full of that good faith which ſucceſsful commerce inſpires, fled everywhere from the violence and injuſtice of theſe Turkiſh tyrants, and landed in ſafety their riches

and

and perſons on the oppoſite ſhore of the kingdom of Adel. The trade from India, flying from the ſame enemy, took refuge in Adel among its own correſpondents, the Mooriſh merchants, during the violent and impolitic tyranny that everywhere took place under this Turkiſh oppreſſion.

Zeyla is a ſmall iſland, on the very coaſt of Adel, oppoſite to Arabia Felix without the Straits of Babelmandeb, upon the entrance of the Indian Ocean. The Turks of Arabia, though they were blind to the cauſe, were ſenſible of the great influx of trade into the oppoſite kingdom. They took poſſeſſion, therefore, of Zeyla, where they eſtabliſhed what they call a cuſtomhouſe, and by means of that poſt, and gallies, cruiſing in the narrow Straits, they laid the Indian trade to Adel under heavy contributions, that might, in ſome meaſure, indemnify them for the great deſertion their violence and injuſtice had occaſioned in Arabia.

This ſtep threatened the very exiſtence both of Adel and Abyſſinia; and conſidering the vigorous government of the one, and the weak politics and prejudices of the other, it is more than probable the Turks would have ſubdued both Adel and Abyſſinia, had they not, in India their chief object, met the Portugueſe, ſtrongly eſtabliſhed, and governed by a ſucceſſion of kings who had not in any age their equals, and ſeconded by officers and ſoldiers who, for diſcipline, courage, love to their country, and affection to their ſovereign, were, perhaps, ſuperior to any troops, or any ſet of individuals, that, as far as we can judge from hiſtory, have ever yet appeared in the world.

It

It was not now a time for a woman to reign, nor, which was the ſame thing, to place a child upon the throne. The empreſs Helena ſaw this diſtinctly; but her ambition made her prefer the love of reigning to the viſible neceſſities and welfare of her country. She knew the progreſs and extent of the Portugueſe power in India; and ſaw plainly there was no proſpect, but in their aſſiſtance, at once to ſave both Abyſſinia and Adel.

Peter Covillan, ſent thither as ambaſſador by John king of Portugal, had, for two reigns, been detained in Abyſſinia, with a conſtant refuſal of leave to return. He was now become an object of curioſity rather than uſe. However, except his liberty, he had wanted nothing. The empreſs had married him nobly in the country; had given him large appointments, both as to profit and dignity. She now began to be ſenſible of the conſequence of having with her a man of his abilities, who could open to her the method of correſponding effectually both with India and Portugal in their own language, to which, as well as to the perſons to whom her letters were to be addreſſed, ſhe was then an utter ſtranger.

She had about her court an Armenian merchant named Matthew, a perſon of great truſt and diſcretion, who had been long accuſtomed to go to the ſeveral kingdoms of the Eaſt upon mercantile commiſſions for the king and for his nobles. He had been at Cairo, Jeruſalem, Ormus, Iſpahan, and in the Eaſt Indies on the coaſt of Malabar; both in places conquered by the Portugueſe, and in thoſe that yet held out under their native Pagan princes.

He

He was one of thoſe factors which, as I have already ſaid, are employed by the king and great men in Abyſſinia to ſell or barter, in the places above mentioned, ſuch part of their revenue as are paid them in kind.

Theſe men are chiefly Greeks, or Armenians, but the preference is always given to the latter. Both nations pay caratch, or capitation, to the Grand Signiors, (whoſe ſubjects they are) and both have, in conſequence, paſſports, protections, and liberty to trade wherever they pleaſe throughout the empire, without being liable to thoſe inſults and extortions from the Turkiſh officers that other ſtrangers are.

The Armenians, of all the people in the Eaſt, are thoſe moſt remarkable for their patience and ſobriety. They are generally maſters of moſt of the eaſtern languages; are of ſtrong, robuſt conſtitutions; of all people, the moſt attentive to the beaſts and merchandiſe they have in charge; exceedingly faithful, and content with little. This Matthew, queen Helena choſe for her ambaſſador to Portugal, and joined a young Abyſſinian with him, who died in the voyage. He was charged with letters to the king, which, with the other diſpatches, as they are long, and abound with fiction and bombaſt rather than truth and facts, I have not troubled myſelf to tranſcribe; they are, beſides, in many printed collections *.

It appears clearly from theſe letters, that they were the joint compoſitions of Covillan, who knew perfectly the manner of correſponding with his court

* Vide Marmol, vol. i. cap. 37.

court upon dangerous ſubjects, and of the ſimple Abyſſinian confidents of the empreſs Helena, who, unacquainted with embaſſies or correſpondence with princes, or the ill conſequence that theſe letters would be of to their ambaſſador and his errand, if they happened to be intercepted by an enemy, told plainly all they deſired and wiſhed to execute by the aſſiſtance of the Portugueſe. Thus, in the firſt part of the letter, (which we ſhall ſuppoſe dictated by Covillan) the empreſs remits the deſcription of her wants, and what is the ſubject of the embaſſy, to Matthew her ambaſſador, whom ſhe qualifies as her confidential ſervant, inſtructed in her moſt ſecret intentions; deſiring the king of Portugal to believe what he ſhall report from her to him in private, as if they were her own words uttered immediately from her to him in perſon. So far was prudent; ſuch a conduct as we ſhould expect from a man like Covillan, long accuſtomed to be truſted with the ſecret negociations of his ſovereign.

But the latter end of his diſpatches (the work, we ſuppoſe, of Abyſſinian ſtateſmen) divulges the whole ſecret. It explains the motives of this embaſſy in the cleareſt manner, deſiring the king of Portugal to ſend a ſufficient force to deſtroy Mecca and Medina; to aſſiſt them with a ſufficient number of ſhips, and to annihilate the Turkiſh power by ſea; while they, by land, ſhould extirpate all the Mahometans on their borders; and it ſtigmatizes theſe Mahometans, both Turks and Moors, with the moſt opprobrious names it was poſſible to deviſe.

With

With the firſt part of theſe diſpatches, it is plain, Matthew, as an envoy, might have paſſed unmoleſted; he had only to give to the ſecret wiſhes of the empreſs, with which he was charged, what kind of mercantile colour he pleaſed. But the laſt part of the letter brought home to him a charge of the deepeſt dye, both of ſacrilege and high-treaſon, that he meditated againſt the Ottoman empire, whoſe Raya * he was; and, there can be no doubt, had theſe letters been intercepted and read, Matthew's embaſſy and life would have ended together under ſome exquiſite ſpecies of torture. This, indeed, he ſeems to have apprehended; as, after his arrival in India, he conſtantly refuſed to ſhew his diſpatches, even to the Portugueſe viceroy himſelf, from whom, in the inſtant, he had received very ſingular favour and protection.

The king, when of age, never could be brought to acknowledge this embaſſy by Matthew; but, as we ſhall ſee, did conſtantly deny it. If we believe the Portugueſe, the deſpair of the empreſs was ſo great, that ſhe offered one-third of the kingdom to the king of Portugal if he relieved her. Nothing of this kind appears in the letters; but, if this offer was part of Matthew's private diſpatches, we may ſee a reaſon why David did not wiſh to own the commiſſion and offer as his.

Matthew had a ſafe paſſage to Dabul in India, but here his misfortunes began. The governor, taking him for a ſpy, confined him in cloſe priſon. But Albuquerque, then viceroy of India, reſiding at

* Is a ſubject paying Capitation.

at Goa, who had himſelf a deſign upon Abyſſinia, hearing that ſuch a perſon, in ſuch a character, was arrived, ſent and took him out of the hands of the governor of Dabul, where his ſufferings elſe would not have ſo quickly ended. All the Portugueſe cried out upon ſeeing ſuch an ambaſſador as Matthew ſent to their maſter; ſometimes they pretended that he was a ſpy of the Sultan, at other times he was an impoſtor, a cook, or ſome other menial ſervant.

Albuquerque treated with him privately before he landed, to make his commiſſions known to him; but he expreſsly refuſed ſhewing any letter unleſs to the king himſelf in Portugal. This behaviour hurt him in the eyes of the viceroy, who was therefore diſpoſed, with the reſt of his officers, to ſlight him when he ſhould come aſhore. But Matthew, now out of danger, and knowing his perſon to be ſacred, would no longer be treated like a private perſon. He ſent to let the viceroy, biſhop, and clergy know, that, beſides his conſequence as an ambaſſador, which demanded their reſpect, he was the bearer of a piece of wood of the true croſs which he carried as a preſent to the king of Portugal; and, therefore, he required them, as they would avoid an imputation of ſacrilege, to ſhew to that precious relict the utmoſt reſpect, and celebrate its arrival as a feſtival. No more was neceſſary after this. The whole ſtreets of Goa were filled with proceſſions; the troops were all under arms; the viceroy, and the principal officers, met Matthew at his landing, and conveyed him to the palace, where he was magnificently lodged and feaſted.

feasted. But nothing could long overcome the prejudices the Portugueſe had imbibed upon the firſt ſight of him; and, notwithſtanding he carried a piece of the true croſs, both he and it ſoon fell into perfect oblivion: Nor was it till 1513, after he had ſtaid three years in India, that he got leave to proceed to Portugal by a fleet returning home loaded with ſpices.

Damianus Goez the hiſtorian, though apparently a man of good ſenſe and candour, cannot conjecture why this Armenian was ſent as an ambaſſador, and wiſhes to be reſolved why not an Abyſſinian nobleman. But it is obvious from the character I have already given of him, there could be nobody in the empreſs's power that had half his qualifications; and, beſides, an Abyſſinian nobleman would not have ventured to go, as knowing very well that everywhere beyond the limits of his own country he would have been without protection; and the firſt Turk in whoſe power he might have fallen would have ſold him for a ſlave. In no other character is any of his nation ſeen, either in Arabia or India, and his maſter has no treaty with any ſtate whatever. Add to this, that an Abyſſinian ſpeaks no language but his own, which is not underſtood out of his own country; and is abſolutely ignorant even of the exiſtence of other far diſtant nations.

But, beſides, there was an Abyſſinian ſent with Matthew, who died; and here Damianus Goez's wonder ſhould ceaſe.

The ſame ill-fortune, which had attended Matthew in India, followed him in his voyage to Portugal. The captains of the ſhips contended with each

each other who ſhould behave worſt to him; and, in the midſt of all this ill-treatment, the ſhip which he was on board of arrived at Liſbon. The king, upon hearing the particulars of this ill uſage, immediately put the offenders in irons, where they had, probably, lain during their lives, had they not been freed by the interceſſion of Matthew.

David (as I have before obſerved) was only eleven years old * when he was placed upon the throne; and, at his inauguration, took the name of Lebna Denghel, or the Virgin's Frankincenſe; then that of Etana Denghel, or the Myrrh of the Virgin; and after that, of Wanag Segued, which ſignifies Reverenced, or Feared, among the Lions, with whom towards the laſt of his reign, he reſided in wilds and mountains more than with men.

During this minority, there was peace with Mahomet king of Adel. Maffudi ſtill continued his depredations; and, by his liberality, had formed ſtrong connections with the Turks in Arabia. In return for the number of ſlaves whom he had ſent to Mecca, a green ſilk ſtandard, (that of Mahomet and of the Faith), and a tent of black velvet, embroidered with gold, were ſent him by the Sherriffe, the greateſt honour a Mahometan could poſſibly receive, and he was alſo made Shekh of the iſland of Zeyla, which was delivering the key of Abyſſinia to him.

It was not till David had arrived at ſixteen years of age that the conſtant ſucceſs of Maffudi, the honours beſtowed upon him, and the gain which accrued

* Vid. David's letter to Emanuel, king of Portugal 1524.

accrued from all his expeditions, had at laſt determined the king of Adel to break the peace with Abyſſinia, and join him. Theſe princes, with the whole Mahometan force, had fallen together upon Dawaro, Ifat, and Fatigar; and, in one year, had driven away, and ſlain, above nineteen thouſand Chriſtians, ſubjects to the king. A terror was now ſpread over the whole kingdom, and great blame laid both upon the empreſs and the king, for ſitting and looking timidly on, while the Turks and Moors, year after year, ravaged whole provinces without reſiſtance.

Theſe murmurs at laſt rouſed David, who, for his own part, had not ſuffered them willingly ſo long. He determined immediately to raiſe an army, and to command it in perſon: In vain the empreſs admoniſhed him of his danger, and his abſolute want of experience in matters of war; in vain ſhe adviſed him to employ ſome of the old officers againſt the veteran Mooriſh troops.

The king anſwered, That every officer of merit had been tried already, and baffled from beginning to end, ſo that the army had no confidence in them; that he was reſolved to take his trial as the others had done, and leave the event where it ought to be left. Though the diviners all propheſied ill from this reſolution of the king, the generality of the kingdom, and young nobility, flocked to his ſtandard, rejoicing in a leader ſo near their own age. The middle-aged had great hopes of the vigour of that youth; and the old were not more backward, ſatisfied of the weight their years and expe-

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rience muſt give them in the councils of a young king.

Seldom a better army took the field; and the empreſs, from her own treaſures, furniſhed every thing, even to ſuperfluity, engaging all the people of conſequence by giving them, in the moſt affable manner, preſents in hand, and magnificent promiſes of recompence hereafter. Great as theſe preparations were, they had not made much impreſſion among the confederates in Adel; and already the king had put himſelf at the head of his army, before the Moors ſeemed to think it worth their while to follow him. They were, indeed, at that very time, laying waſte a part of the kingdom of Abyſſinia. The king, then, by quick marches, advanced through Fatigar, as if he was going to Auſſa, the capital of Adel.

Between Fatigar and the plain country of Adel there is a deep large valley, through which it was neceſſary the army ſhould paſs. Very ſteep mountains bound it on every ſide, whilſt two openings (each of them very narrow) were the only paſſages by which it was poſſible to enter or go out. The king divided his army into two; he kept the beſt troops and largeſt body with himſelf, and ſent Betwudet with the reſt, as if they intended to fight the enemy before they gained the defiles. The Moors, on the other hand, terrified at what muſt happen if the king with his army marched into their defenceleſs country, accounted it a great eſcape to get into theſe very defiles before they were forced to an engagement. Betwudet, who deſired no more, gave them their way, and, entering the valley behind them,

them, encamped there. The king, at the other end, had done the ſame, unſeen by the enemy, who thought he was advanced on his march to Auſſa. The Moors were thus completely hemmed in, and the king's army vaſtly ſuperior. He had ordered his tents to be left ſtanding, with a body of troops in them, and theſe completely covered the only outlet to the valley, whilſt Betwudet and his party had advanced conſiderably, and made much the ſame diſpoſition.

The king drew up his troops early in the morning, and offered the enemy battle, when the whole Abyſſinian army was ſurpriſed to diſcover a backwardneſs in the Moors ſo unlike their behaviour at former times; well they might, when they were informed from whom that panic among the Moors came. Maffudi, a fanatic from the beginning, whether really deceived by ſuch a prophecy, or raiſed to a pitch of pride and enthuſiaſm by the honours he had received, and deſirous, by a remarkable death, to deſerve the rank of martyr among thoſe of his own religion, or from whatever cauſe it aroſe, came to the king of Adel, and told him, that his time was now come; that it had been propheſied to him long ago, that if, that year, he fought the king of Abyſſinia in perſon, he was there to loſe his life: That he knew, for certain, David was then preſent, having, with his own eyes, ſeen the ſcarlet tent (a colour which is only uſed by the king; he deſired, therefore, the king of Adel to make the beſt of his way through a leſs ſteep part of the mountain, which he ſhewed him; to take his family and favourites along with him, and leave under

under his command the army to try their fortune with David. Mahomet, at no time very fond of fighting, never found himself less so than upon this advice of Maffudi's. He resolved, therefore, to follow his counsel; and, before the battle began, withdrew himself through the place that was shewn him, and was followed by a few of his friends.

It was now nine o'clock, and the sun began to be hot, before which the Abyssinians never choose to engage, when Maffudi, judging the king of Adel was beyond danger, sent a trumpet to the Abyssinian camp, with a challenge to any man of rank in the army to fight him in single combat, under condition that the victory should be accounted to belong to that army whose champion was victorious, and that, thereupon, both parties should withdraw their troops without further bloodshed. It does not appear whether the conditions were agreed to, but the challenge was accepted as soon as offered. Gabriel Andreas the monk, who, in the reign of Naod, had by the king's order, lost a part of his tongue for giving it too much licence, offered himself first to the king, beseeching him to trust to him that day, his own honour, and the fortune of the army. The king consented without hesitation, with the general applause of all the nobility; for Andreas, though a monk, was a man of great family and distinction; the most learned of the court; liberal, rich, affable, and remarkable for facetious conversation; he was, besides, a good soldier, of tried skill and valour, and, in strength and activity, surpassed by no man in the army.

Maffudi

Maffudi was not backward to preſent himſelf; nor was the combat longer than might be expected from two ſuch willing champions. Gabriel Andreas, ſeeing his opportunity, with a two-handed ſword ſtruck Maffudi between the lower part of the neck and the ſhoulder, ſo violently, that he nearly divided his body into two, and felled him dead to the ground. He then cut his head off, and threw it at the king's feet, ſaying, "There is the Goliah of the "infidels."

This expreſſion became inſtantly the word of battle, or ſignal to charge. The king, at the head of his troops, ruſhed upon the Mooriſh army, and, throwing them into diſorder, drove them back upon Betwudet, who, with his freſh troops, forced them again back to the king. Seeing no hopes of relief, they diſperſed to the mountains, and were ſlaughtered and hunted like wild beaſts by the peaſants, or driven to periſh with thirſt and hunger. About 12,000 of the Mahometan army are ſaid to have been ſlain upon the field, with no very conſiderable loſs on the ſide of the conquerors. The green ſtandard of Mahomet was taken, as alſo the black velvet tent embroidered with gold; which laſt, we ſhall ſee, the king gave to the Portugueſe ambaſſador ſome time afterwards, to conſecrate and ſay maſs in. A vaſt number of cattle was taken, and with them much rich merchandiſe of the Indies. Nor did the king content himſelf with what he had got in battle. He advanced and encamped at a place where was held the firſt market of Adel *.



* Vide Map of Shoa.

The next day he proceeded to a town where was a houſe of the king, and, going up to the door, and finding it locked, he ſtruck the door with his lance, and nobody anſwering, he prohibited the ſoldiers from plundering it, and retired with his army home, leaving his lance ſticking in the door as a ſign of his having been there, and having had it in his power.

Though the king was received on his return amidſt the greateſt acclamations of his ſubjects, as the ſaviour of his country, the eyes of the whole nation and army were firſt fixed on Andreas, whoſe bravery had at laſt delivered them from that conſtant and inveterate ſcourge, Maſſudi. Every body preſſed forward to throw flowers and green branches in his way; the women celebrating him with ſongs, putting garlands on his head, and holding out the young children to ſee him as he paſſed. The battle was fought in the month of July 1516; and, the ſame day, the iſland of Zeyla, in the mouth of the Red Sea, was taken, and its town burned by the Portugueſe armament, under Lopez Saurez Alberguiera.

Neither the ſuſpicions tranſmitted from India, nor the mean perſon of Matthew the ambaſſador, ſeem to have made any impreſſion upon the king of Portugal. He received him with every ſort of honour, and teſtified the moſt profound reſpect for his maſter, and attention to the errand he came upon. Matthew was lodged and maintained with the utmoſt ſplendour; and, conſidering the great uſe of ſo powerful a friend on the African coaſt of the Red Sea, where his fleets would meet with all ſort of

proviſion and protection, while they purſued the Turkiſh ſquadrons, he prepared an embaſſy on his part, and ſent Matthew home on board the fleet commanded by Lopez Suarez for India.

Edward Galvan, a man of capacity and experience, who had filled the offices of ſecretary of ſtate and ambaſſador in Spain, France, and Germany, arrived at that time of life when he might reaſonably expect to paſs the reſt of his days in eaſe, wealth, and honour, found himſelf unexpectedly choſen, at the age of eighty-ſix to go ambaſſador from his ſovereign to Abyſſinia. Goez had much more reaſon to wonder at the ambaſſador fixed upon by his maſter, than at that of Abyſſinia ſent by the empreſs Helena to Portugal. The fleet under Saurez entered the Red Sea, and anchored at the flat iſland of Camaran, cloſe on the coaſt of Arabia Felix, one of the moſt unwholeſome places he could have choſen. Here Edward Galvan died; and here Suarez, moſt ignorantly, reſolved to paſs the winter, which he did, ſuffering much for want of every ſort of proviſion but water; whereas twenty-four hours of any wind would have carried him to Maſuah, to his journey's end; where, if he had loſt the monſoon, he would ſtill have had great abundance of neceſſaries, and been in the way every moment of promoting the wiſhes of his maſter.

Lopez de Segueyra ſucceeded the ignorant Suarez, who had returned to India. He fitted out a ſtrong fleet at Goa, with which he entered the Red Sea, and ſailed for the iſland of Maſuah, where he arrived the 16th of April 1520, having Matthew along with him. Upon the firſt approach of the

fleet, the inhabitants, both of the iſland and town, abandoned them, and fled to Arkeeko on the main land. Segueyra having remained before Maſuah a few days without committing any hoſtilities, there came at laſt to him a Chriſtian and a Moor from the continent; who informed him that the main-land then before him, was part of the kingdom of Abyſſinia, governed by an officer called Baharnagaſh: they added, that the reaſon of their flying at the ſight of the fleet was, that the Turks frequently made deſcents, and ravaged the iſland; but that all the inhabitants of the continent were Chriſtians. The Portugueſe general was very joyful on this intelligence, and began to treat Matthew more humanely, finding how truly and exactly he had deſcribed theſe places. He gave, both to the Chriſtian and Moor that came off to him, a rich veſt; commended them for having fled to Arkeeko rather than expoſe themſelves to an attack from the Turks, but directed them to aſſure the people on the continent, that they too were all Chriſtians, and under the command of the king of Abyſſinia; being arrived there purpoſely for his ſervice, ſo that they might return whenever they pleaſe, in perfect ſafety.

The next day, came down to the ſhore the governor of Arkeeko, accompanied with thirty horſemen, and above two hundred foot. He was mounted on a fine horſe, and dreſſed in a kind of ſhirt reſembling that of the Moors. The governor brought down four oxen, and received in return certain pieces of ſilk, with which he was well pleaſed. A very familiar converſation followed; the governor kindly

kingly inviting the Portugueſe general aſhore, aſſuring him that the Baharnagaſh, under whoſe command he was, had already intelligence of his arrival.

In anſwer to his inquiries about the religion of the country, the governor told him, that in a mountain, then in ſight, twenty-four miles diſtant, there was a convent called *the Monaſtery of Biſan*, (which Matthew had often deſcribed in the voyage (whoſe monks, being informed of his arrival, had deputed ſeven of their number to wait upon him, whom the Portugueſe general went to meet accordingly, and received them in the kindeſt manner.

Theſe monks, as ſoon as they ſaw Matthew, broke out into the warmeſt expreſſions of friendſhip and eſteem, congratulating him with tears in their eyes upon his long voyage and abſence. The Portugueſe general then invited the monks on board his veſſel, where he regaled them, and gave to each preſents that were moſt ſuitable to their auſtere life. On his ſide, Segueyra choſe ſeven Portugueſe, with Peter Gomez Teſſera, auditor of the Eaſt Indies, who underſtood Arabic very well, to return the viſit of the monks, and ſee the monaſtery of Biſan. This ſhort journey they very happily performed. Teſſera brought back a parchment manuſcript, which he received as a preſent from the monks, to be ſent to the king of Portugal.

It was on the 24th of April that the Baharnagaſh arrived at Arkeeko, having before ſent information of his intended viſit. The Portugueſe general who never doubted but that he would come to the ſea-ſide, pitched his tents, and ſpread his carpets and cuſhions on the ground to receive him. But

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it was ſignified to him from the Baharnagaſh, who was probably afraid of putting himſelf under the guns of the fleet, that he did not intend to advance ſo far, and that the governor ſhould meet him half way. This being agreed to on both ſides, they ſat down on the graſs.

The Baharnagaſh began the converſation, by telling the Portugueſe, they had, in virtue of certain prophecies, been long expected in this country; and that he, and all the officers of Abyſſinia, were ready to do them every ſervice and kindneſs. After the Portugueſe general had returned a proper anſwer, the prieſts and monks concluded the interview with certain religious ſervices. Segueyra then made the Baharnagaſh a preſent of a very fine ſuit of complete armour with ſome pieces of ſilk; while the Baharnagaſh, on his ſide, made the return with a very fine horſe and mule.

All doubt concerning Matthew was removed at this interview; he was acknowledged as a genuine ambaſſador. The Portugueſe now flocked to Segueyra, beſeeching him to chooſe from among his men, who ſhould accompany him to the court. The firſt ſtep was to name Roderigo de Lima ambaſſador from the king of Portugal, inſtead of Galvan, who was dead; and for his ſuite, George de Breu, Lopez de Gama, John Scolare ſecretary to the ambaſſador, John Gonſalvez his factor and interpreter, Emmanuel de Mare organiſt, Peter Lopez, Maſter John his phyſician, Gaſpar Pereira, and Lazarus d'Andrad a painter. The three chaplains were John Fernandes, Peter Alphonſo Mendez, and Franciſco Alvarez. In this company alſo

went

went Matthew, the Abyſſinian ambaſſador returned from Portugal, and with him three Portugueſe, one called Magailanes, the other Alvaremgo, and the third Diego Fernandes.

It ſeemed probable, the ſevere blow which David had given to the king of Adel, by the total deſtruction of his army on the death of his general Maffudi, would have procured a ceſſation of hoſtilities to the Abyſſinian frontiers, which they had not experienced during the life of that general; but it appeared afterwards, that, increaſed in riches and population by the great acceſſion of power which followed the interruption of the Indian trade in Arabia by the Turkiſh conqueſt, far from entertaining thoughts of peace, they were rather meditating a more formidable manner of attack, by training themſelves to the uſe of fire-arms and artillery, of which they had provided a quantity, and to which the Abyſſinians were as yet ſtrangers.

The king was encamped in Shoa, covering and keeping in awe his Mahometan provinces, Fatigar and Dawaro; beſides which he ſeemed to have no object but the conqueſt of the Dobas, that bordered equally upon the Mooriſh and Chriſtian frontiers, and who (though generally gained by the Mahometans) were, when occaſion offered, enemies to both. The Shum * of Giannamora, a ſmall diſtrict belonging to Abyſſinia, full of brave ſoldiers, and conſiderably reinforced by David for the very purpoſe, had the charge of bringing theſe barbarians

* Or Governor.

rians to ſubjection, as being their immediate neighbour.

The king had afterwards advanced eaſtward to the frontiers of Fatigar, but was ſtill in the ſouthern part of his dominions. The ambaſſador and his retinue were landed on the north. They were to croſs the whole extent of the empire through woods and over mountains, the like of which are not known in Europe, full of ſavage beaſts, and men more ſavage than the beaſts themſelves; interſected by large rivers, and what was the worſt circumſtance, ſwelling every day by the tropical rains. Frequently deſerts of no conſiderable length, indeed, intervened, where no ſuſtenance was to be found for man or beaſt, nor relief for accidental misfortunes. Yet ſuch was the bravery of that ſmall company, that they heſitated not a moment to undertake this enterpriſe. Every thing was thought eaſy which contributed to the glory of their king, and the honour of their country.

It was not long before this gallant company found need of all their conſtancy and courage; for in their ſhort journey to the convent of St. Michael (the firſt they attempted) they found the wood ſo thick that there was ſcarcely paſſage for either man or beaſt. Briers and thorns, too, of a variety of ſpecies, which they had never before ſeen, added greatly to the fatigue which the thickneſs of the woods had occaſioned. Mountains preſented themſelves over mountains, broken into terrible precipices and ravines, by violent torrents and conſtant ſtorms; their black and bare tops ſeemed as it were calcined by the rays of a burning ſun,

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and by inceſſant lightnings and thunder. Great numbers of wild beaſts alſo preſented themſelves every where in theſe dark foreſts, and ſeemed only to be hindered from devouring them by their wonder at ſeeing ſo many men in ſo lonely a ſituation. At laſt the woods began to grow thinner, and ſome fields appeared where the people were ſitting armed, guarding their ſmall flocks of half-ſtarved goats and kine, and crops of millet, of which they ſaw a conſiderable quantity ſown. The men were black, their hair very gracefully plaited, and were altogether naked, excepting a ſmall piece of leather that covered their middle. At this place they were met by twelve monks, four of whom were diſtinguiſhed by their advanced years and the reſpect paid to them by the others.

Having reſted their mules and camels a ſhort time, they again began their journey by the ſide of a great lake, near which was a very high mountain, and this they were too weary to attempt to paſs. Full of diſcontent and deſpondency, they halted at the foot of this mountain, where they paſſed the night, having received a cow for ſupper, a preſent from the convent. Here Matthew (the ambaſſador) ſeparated his baggage from that of the caravan, and left it to the care of the monks. He had probably made ſome little money in Portugal; and, diſtruſting his reception with the king, wiſely determined to place it out of danger. The precaution, however, proved ſuperfluous; for, a few days after, an epidemical fever began to manifeſt itſelf, which, in eight-and-forty hours, carried off Matthew, and ſoon after Pereira, the ſervant of

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Don Roderigo; ſo that no opportunity now offered for an explanation with the king about his or the empreſs's promiſe of ceding one-third of the kingdom to the Portugueſe in caſe the king would ſend them ſuccour. Terrified by the fever, and the bad proſpect of the weather, they reſumed their journey.

The monaſtery of Biſan (to which they were now going) is ſo called from the great quantity of water which is every where found about it. The ſimilitude of ſound has made Poncet *, and ſeveral other travellers, call it the Monaſtery of the Viſion; but Biſan (water) is its true name, being plentifully ſupplied with that moſt valuable element. A number of lakes and rivers are interſperſed through its plains; while abundant ſprings, that are never dry, flow from the top of each rock, daſhing their rills againſt the rugged projections of the cliffs below.

The monaſtery of Biſan, properly ſo called, is the head of ſix others in the compaſs of 26 miles; each convent placed like a tower on the top of its own rock. That upon which Biſan is ſituated is very high, and almoſt perpendicular; and from this riſes another ſtill higher than it, which unleſs to its inhabitants, is perfectly inacceſſible. It is, on every ſide, ſurrounded with wood, interſperſed with fruit-trees of many different kinds, as well of thoſe known as of thoſe unknown in Europe. Oranges, citrons, and limes are in great abundance;

* Vide Poncet's travels, in his return through Tigré, p. 116. London edit. 12mo. 1709.

dance; wild peaches and ſmall figs of a very indifferent quality; black grapes, on loaded branches, hang down from the barren timber round which they are twined, and afford plentiful ſupply to man and beaſt: The fields are covered with myrtles and many ſpecies of jeſſamin; with roſes too of various colours; but fragrance is denied to them all, except one ſort, which is the white one, ſingle-leafed *.

The monks of theſe convents were ſaid once to be about a thouſand in number. They have a large territory, and pay a tribute in cows and horſes to the Baharnagaſh, who is their ſuperior. Their horſes are eſteemed good, as coming from the neighbourhood of the Arabs. However, though I had abſolute choice of them all during the time I commanded the king's guard, I could never draw from that part of the country above a ſcore of ſufficient ſtrength and ſize to bear a man in complete armour.

I ſhall now leave Don Roderigo to purſue his journey towards the king at Shoa. The hiſtory of it, and of his embaſſy, publiſhed at large by Alvarez his chaplain, has not met, from the hiſtorians of his own country, with a reception which favours the authenticity of its narrative. There are, indeed, in the whole of it, and eſpecially where religion is concerned, many things very difficult of belief, which ſeem to be the work of the Jeſuits ſome years poſterior to the time in which Alvarez was in Abyſſinia. Tellez condemns him, though a writer

* In Barbary called *Miſhta*, in Abyſſinia, *Kagga*.

writer of thoſe times; and Damianus Goez, one of the firſt hiſtorians, ſays, that he had ſeen a journal written in Alvarez's own name, very different from the journal that is gone forth to the public. For my part, I can only ſay, that what is related of the firſt audience with the king, and many of the following pages, ſeem to me to be fabrications of people that never have been in Abyſſinia; and, if this is the caſe, no imputation can be laid againſt Franciſco Alvarez, as, perhaps, he is not the author of the miſrepreſentation in queſtion. But, as to the cordiality with which the Catholic religion was received by the monks and people in general, during the long ſtay and bad reception Don Roderigo met with, I have no ſort of doubt that this is a falſehood, and this muſt be charged directly to his account.

We have already ſeen that, early as Zara Jacob's time, the religion of the Franks was held in the utmoſt deteſtation, and that in Bæda Mariam's reign the whole country was in rebellion, becauſe the king had directed the Virgin Mary to be painted by one Branca Leon, a Venetian painter, then alive, and in court, when Don Roderigo de Lima was with the king in Shoa. Iſcander and Naod were both ſtrict in the tenets of the church of Alexandria; and two Abunas, Imaranha Chriſtos, who lived till Iſcander's time, and Abuna Marcus, alive in Alvarez's, had given no allowance for ſtrange or foreign worſhip to be introduced. How the Catholic could be ſo favourably and generally received in the time of Alvarez is what I cannot conceive. Blood enough was ſplit immediately afterwards, to

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ſhew that this affection to the Roman Catholic religion, if any ſuch there was in Alvarez's time, muſt have been merely tranſitory. When, therefore, I find any thing in this journal plainly miſunderſtood, I explain and vindicate it; where I ſee there is a fact deliberately miſrepreſented, ſuch as the celebration of the Epiphany, I refute it from ocular demonſtration. The reſt of the journal I leave *in medio* to the judgment of my reader, who will find it at his bookſeller's; only obſerving, that there can be no doubt that the journey itſelf was made by Don Roderigo, and the perſons named with him.

I have preſerved the ſeveral ſtations of theſe travellers in my map, though a great part of the countries through which they paſſed is now in the hands of the Galla, and is as inacceſſible to Abyſſinians as it is to ſtrangers.

There are two particulars in Alvarez's account of this journey which very much ſurpriſe me. The firſt is, the daily and conſtant danger this company was in from tigers, ſo daring as to preſent themſelves within pike-length. Of this I have taken notice in the appendix when ſpeaking of the hyæna.

The other particular relates to the field of beans through which they paſſed. I never yet ſaw this ſort of grain, or pulſe in Abyſſinia. The lupine, a wild plant ſomewhat ſimilar, chiefly infects thoſe provinces from which the honey comes, and is regarded there with the utmoſt averſion. The reaſon of which will be ſeen in the ſequel. But as theſe Mahometans, through whoſe country Don Roderigo paſſed, are not indigenous, and never had any connection with the ancient ſtate of manners

or religion of this country, it is more than probable the cultivation of the bean is no older than the ſettlement of theſe Mahometans here, long after the Pythagorean prejudices againſt that plant were forgotten.

It was on the 16th of April 1520 that Don Roderigo de Lima landed in Abyſſinia; and it was the 16th of October of the ſame year when he arrived within ſight of the king's camp, diſtant about three miles. The king had advanced, as hath been ſaid, into Fatigar, about twenty-five miles from the firſt fair in the kingdom of Adel, and ſomething leſs than two hundred from the port of Zeyla. The ambaſſador after ſo painful a journey, expected an immediate admiſſion into the king's preſence. Inſtead of which, a great officer, called *the Hadug Ras* *, which is chief or commander of the aſſes, was ſent to carry him three miles farther diſtant, where they ordered him to pitch his tent, and five years paſſed in the embaſſy afterwards before he procured his diſmiſſion.

Alvarez accounts very lamely for this prodigious interval of time; and, excepting the celebration the Epiphany, he does not mention one remarkable occurrence in the whole of this period. One would imagine their ſtay had not been above a month, and that one converſation only paſſed upon buſineſs, which I ſhall here ſet down as a ſpecimen of the humour the parties were in the one with the other.

The king carried the ambaſſador, to ſee the church Mecana Selaſſé, the church of the Trinity, which

* This is a name of humility. He is a great officer, and has no care or charge of aſſes.

which was then repairing, where many of the kings had been buried while the Royal family reſided in Shoa. All the churches in Abyſſinia are thatched. Some of Roderigo's own retinue, who bore him ill-will, had put it into the king's head how elegant this church would be if covered with lead, a thing he certainly could have no idea of. He aſked Don Roderigo, whether the king of Portugal could not ſend him as much ſheet-lead as would ſerve to cover that church? To which the ambaſſador replied, That the king of Portugal, upon bare mentioning the thing, would ſend him as much ſheet-lead § as would cover not only that church, but all the other churches he ſhould ever build in Abyſſinia; and, after all, the preſent would be but a trifling one.

Immediately upon this the king changed his diſcourſe; and obſerved to the ambaſſador, in a very ſerious tone of voice, "That, ſince they were now upon the ſubject of preſents, he could not help letting the king of Portugal know, that, if ever he ſent an ambaſſador again into that country, he ſhould take care to accompany him with preſents of value, for otherwiſe ſtranger ambaſſadors that ventured to come before him without theſe very ill received." To which the ambaſſador returned warmly, "That it was very from being the cuſtom of the king of Portugal to ſend preſents to any king upon earth; that, having no ſuperior, it was uſual for him, only to receive them from others, and to accept them or not, according to his royal pleaſure; for it was infinitely below him to conſider what

§ Alvarez Hiſtoire d'Ethiopic. p. 157.

what was the value of the preſent itſelf. He then deſired the king of Abyſſinia might be informed, that he, Don Roderigo, came ambaſſador from the general of the Indies, and not from the king of Portugal; nevertheleſs, when the king of Portugal had lately diſpatched Galvan, who had died upon the road, ambaſſador to his highneſs, he had ſent with him preſents to the value of 100,000 ducats, conſulting his own greatneſs, but not conſidering himſelf as under any obligation to ſend any preſents at all; and as to the many ſcandalous aſperſions that had been thrown upon him by mean people, which the king had given credit to, and were made conſtantly part of his diſcourſe, he wiſhed his highneſs, from the peruſal of the letters which he had brought from the general of the Indies, to learn, that the Portugueſe were not accuſtomed to uſe lying and diſſimulation in their converſations, but to tell the naked truth; to which he the ambaſſador had ſtrictly confined himſelf in every circumſtance he had related to his highneſs, if he pleaſed to believe him; if not, that he was very welcome to do juſt whatever he thought better in his own eyes. Yet he would, once for all, have his highneſs to know, that, though he came only as ambaſſador from the general of the Indies, he could, as ſuch, have preſented himſelf before the greateſt ſovereign upon earth, without being ſubjected to hear ſuch converſation as he had been daily expoſed to from his highneſs, which he, as a Portugueſe nobleman and a ſoldier, though he had been no ambaſſador at all, was not any way diſpoſed to

ſuffer,

ſuffer, and therefore he deſired his immediate diſmiſſion."

Upon this the king ſaid, "That the diſtinction he had ſhewn him was ſuch as he would never have met with from any of his predeceſſors, having brought no preſent of any value." To which the ambaſſador replied in great warmth, "That he had received no diſtinction in this country whatever, but only injuries and wrongs; that he ſhould think he became a martyr if he died in this country where he had been robbed of every thing, except the clothes upon his back; that Matthew, who was but a pretended ambaſſador, had been much otherwiſe treated by the king of Portugal; but for himſelf he deſired nothing but a ſpeedy diſmiſſion, having delivered his letters and done his errand: Till that time, he ſhould expect to be treated like a man of honour, above lying or falſehood." To this the king anſwered, "That he believed him to be a man of honour, worth, and veracity, but that Matthew was a liar: at the ſame time he wiſhed Don Roderigo to know, that he was perfectly informed what degree of reſpect and good uſage Matthew had met with from the king of Portugal's officers and captains, but that he did not impute this Don Roderigo."

There was a rumour at court which very much alarmed the ambaſſador; it was, that the king intended to detain him according to the invariable cuſtom and practice of his country. Two Venetians, Nicholas Branca Leon and Thomas Gradinego, had been forcibly detained ſince the reign of Bæda Mariam. But what terrified Don Rode-

rigo ſtill more, as a caſe moſt ſimilar to his, was the ſight of Peter Covillan then in court, who had been ſent ambaſſador by John king of Portugal to Iſcander, and ever ſince was detained without being able to get leave to return, but was obliged to marry and ſettle in the country.

What was the emperor's real intention is impoſſible now to know; but, having reſolved to ſend an Abyſſinian ambaſſador to the king of Portugal, it was neceſſary to diſmiſs Don Roderigo likewiſe. However, he did not entirely abandon the whole of his deſign, but forcibly detained Maſter John the ſecretary, and Lazarus d'Andrad the painter, and obliged Don Roderigo to depart without them. Zaga Zaab, an Abyſſinian monk, who had learned the Portugueſe language by waiting on Don Roderigo during his ſtay in Abyſſinia, was choſen for the function; and they ſet out together for Maſuah, plentifully furniſhed with every thing neceſſary for the journey, and arrived ſafely there without any remarkable occurrence, where they found Don Hector de Silveyra, governor of the Indies, with his fleet, waiting to carry Don Roderigo de Lima home. Whether the king had changed his mind or not is doubtful; but, on the 27th of April 1526, arrived four meſſengers from court with orders for Don Roderigo to return, and alſo to bring Don Hector along with him. This was immediately and directly refuſed; but it was left in the power of Zaga Zaab to return if he pleaſed, who however declared, that, if he ſtaid behind, he ſhould be thrown to the lions. He, therefore, went on board with great readineſs,

and

and they all ſailed from Maſuah on the 28th of April of the year juſt mentioned, in their return to India.

Theſe frequent intercourſes with the Portugueſe had given great alarm to the Mahometan powers, though neither the king of Abyſſinia, nor the Portugueſe themſelves, had reaped any profit from them, or the ſeveral fleets that had arrived at Maſuah, which had really no end but to ſeek the ambaſſador Don Roderigo. The ſix years ſpent in wrangling and childiſh behaviour, both on the part of the king and the ambaſſador, had an appearance of ſomething ſerious between the two powers; and what ſtill alarmed the Moors more was, that no part of the ſecret had tranſpired, becauſe no ſcheme had really been concerted, only mere propoſals of vain and idle enterpriſes, without either power or will to put them in execution. Such were the plans of a joint army, to attack Arabia, and to conquer it down to Jeruſalem. The Turks † were on their progreſs ſouthward in great force; they had conquered Arabia in leſs than half the time Don Roderigo had ſpent quarrelling with the king about pepper and mules; and a ſtorm was ready to break in a quarter leaſt expected.

In the gentle reigns of the Mamalukes, before the conqueſt of Egypt and Arabia by Selim ‡, a caravan conſtantly ſet out from Abyſſinia directly for Jeruſalem. They had then a treaty with the Arabs. This caravan rendezvouſed at Hamezen,



† Canſo el Gauri, and Tomum Bey.

‡ Selim I. emperor of the Ottomans.

a ſmall territory abounding in proviſions, about two days journey from Dobarwa, and nearly the ſame from Maſuah; it amounted ſometimes in number to a thouſand pilgrims, eccleſiaſtics as well as laymen. They travelled by very eaſy journeys, not above ſix miles a-day, halting to perform divine ſervice, and ſetting up their tents early, and never beginning to travel till towards nine in the morning. They had, hitherto, paſſed in perfect ſafety, with drums beating and colours flying, and, in this way, traverſed the deſert by the road to Suakem.

The year after Selim had taken poſſeſſion of Cairo, Abba Azerata Chriſtos, a monk famous for holineſs, had conducted fifteen hundred of theſe pilgrims with him to Jeruſalem, and they had arrived without accident; but, on their return, they had fallen in with a body of Selim's troops, who ſlew a great part of them, and forced others to take refuge in the deſert, where they periſhed with hunger and thirſt. In the year 1525, another caravan aſſembled at Hamazen, conſiſting of 336 friars and prieſts, and fifteen nuns. They ſet out from Hamazen; on the 12th day after leaving this place, travelling ſlowly; and, being loaded with proviſions and water, they were attacked by the Moors of that diſtrict, and utterly defeated and robbed. Of the pilgrims taken priſoners, all the old men were put to the ſword, and the young were ſold for ſlaves; ſo that of 336 perſons fifteen only eſcaped, but three of which lived to return to Shoa at the time the ambaſſador was there. This was the firſt vengeance the Moors to the northward had yet taken for the alliance made with the Portugueſe; and, from this

this time, the communication with Cairo through the deſert ceaſed as to the Chriſtians, and was carried on by Mahometans only.

Since the time of Peter Covillan's arrival in Abyſſinia, the views of all parties had very much changed. The Portugueſe at firſt coveted the friendſhip of Abyſſinia, for the ſake obtaining through it a communication with India. But they now became indifferent about that intercourſe, ſince they had ſettled in India itſelf, and found the convenience of the paſſage of the Cape of Good Hope. David, freed from his fears of the Moors of Adel, whom he had defeated, and ſeeing the great power of the Turks, ſo much apprehended after the conqueſt of Egypt, diſappointed in India in all their attempts againſt the Portugueſe ſettlements there; being, moreover diſpleaſed with the abrupt behaviour of the ambaſſador Don Roderigo, and the promiſes the empreſs Helena had made by Matthew without his knowledge, he wiſhed no further connection with the Portugueſe, for whoſe aſſiſtance, he thought he ſhould have no uſe.

Selim, whoſe firſt object was the conqueſt of India, had met there ſo rude a reception that he began to deſpair of further ſucceſs in his undertaking; but, having conquered Arabia on one ſide of the Red Sea, he was deſirous of extending his dominions to the other alſo, and for three reaſons: The firſt was, that the ſafety of the holy place of Mecca would be much endangered ſhould a Portugueſe army and fleet rendezvous in Abyſſinia, and be joined by an army there. The ſecond, that his ſhips and gallies could not be in ſecurity at the bottom

tom of the Gulf, ſhould the Portugueſe obtain leave to fortify any iſland or harbour belonging to the Abyſſinians. The third, that the king of Abyſſinia being, as he was taught to believe, the prince whom the prophet Mahomet had honoured with his correſpondence, he thought it a duty incumbent upon him to convert this prince and kingdom to the Mahometan religion by the ſword, a method allowable in no religion but that of the Mahomet and of Rome.

The ancient and feeble arms of lances and bows, carried by half naked peaſants aſſembled in haſte and at random for an occaſion, were now laid aſide. In place of theſe, Selim had left garriſons of veteran troops in all the ſea-coaſt towns of Arabia, exerciſed in fire-arms, and furniſhed with large trains of artillery, ſupported by a large fleet which, though deſtined againſt the Portugueſe in India, and conſtantly beat by them, never failed, both going and coming, to reinforce their poſts in Arabia with ſtores and freſh ſoldiers.

The empreſs Helena died in 1525, the year before the Portugueſe embaſſy ended, after having brought about an interview between the two nations, which, by the continual diſavówal of Matthew's embaſſy, it is plain that David knew not how to turn to his advantage. Soon after her death, the king prepared to renew the war with the Moors, without having received the leaſt advantage from the Portugueſe. But very differently had the people of Adel employed this interval of peace. They had ſtrengthened themſelves by the ſtricteſt friendſhip with the Turkiſh officers in Arabia, eſpecially with the baſha

of

of Zibit, a large trading port nearly oppoſite to Maſuah. A Turkiſh garriſon was put into Zeyla; and a Turk, with a large train of artillery, commanded in it. All was ready againſt the firſt invaſion the king was to make, and he was now marching directly towards their country.

The firſt retaliation, for the Portugueſe friendſhip, (as we have already obſerved) had been the cutting off the caravan for Jeruſalem. In revenge for this, the king had marched into Dawaro, and ſent a body of troops from that province to ſee what was the ſtate of the Mooriſh forces in Adel. Theſe were no ſooner arrived on the frontiers of that kingdom, than they were met by a number of the enemy appointed to guard thoſe confines, and, coming to blows, the Abyſſinians defeated, and drove them into the deſert parts of their own country. The king ſtill advanced till he met the Mahometan army, and a battle was fought at Shimbra Coré, where the Abyſſinian army was totally defeated; the Betwudet, Hadug Ras, the governor of Amhara, Robel, governor of the mountain of Geſhen, with the greateſt part of the nobility, and four thouſand men, were all ſlain.

Mahomet, called Gragné, (which ſignifies *left-handed*) commanded this army. He was governor of Zeyla, and had promoted the league with the Turkiſh baſhas on the coaſt of Arabia; and, having now given the king a check in his firſt enterpriſe, he reſolved to carry on the war with him in a way that ſhould produce ſomething deciſive. He remained then quiet two years at home, ſent all the priſoners he had made in the laſt expedition to Mecca,

Mecca, and to the Turkiſh powers on the coaſt, and required from them in return the number of troops ſtipulated, with a train of portable artillery, which was punctually furniſhed, while a large body of janizaries croſſed over and joined the Mooriſh army. Mahomet led theſe troops ſtraight into Fatigar, which he over-ran, as he did the two other neighbouring provinces Ifat and Dawaro, burning and laying waſte the whole country, and driving, as was his uſual manner, immenſe numbers of inhabitants, whom the ſword had ſpared, back with him to Adel.

The next year, Mahomet marched from Adel directly into Dawaro, committing the ſame exceſſes. The king, who ſaw in deſpair that total ruin threatened his whole country, and that there were no hopes but in a battle, met the Mooriſh army at Ifras, very much inferior to them in every ſort of appointment. The battle was fought 1ſt May 1528; the king was defeated, and Iſlam Segued, his firſt miniſter, who commanded the army that day, with many of his principal officers, were ſlain upon the ſpot, and the Mooriſh army took poſſeſſion of Shoa. David retreated with his broken army into Amhara, and encamped at Hegu, thinking to procure reinforcements during the bad weather, but Gragne was too near to give him time for this. He entered Amhara, deſtroying all before him. The ſecond of November he burnt the church of Mecana Selaſſe of the holy ſepulchre, and Atronſa Mariam; and, on the 8th of the ſame month, Ganeta Georgis; on the 2d of December, Debra Agezia-beher; the 6th

of

of the ſame month, St. Stephen's church; after which he returned to Adel with his booty.

The following year Gragné returned in April, plundered and burnt Warwar, and wintered there. In the year 1530 Gragné invaded the province of Tigré in the month of October, while the king, who had wintered in Dembea, marched up to Woggora; thence, in December, he went to Tſalamet, and returned to Tigré to keep the feaſt of the Epiphany.

The king, next year, marched through Tzegadé, and Gragné cloſe followed him, as if he had been hunting a wild beaſt rather than making war. The 2d of January he burnt Abba Samuel, then went down into Mazaga the borders of Sennaar to a conference with Muchtar, one of his confederates, when it was reſolved that they ſhould fight the king wherever they could meet him, and attach themſelves to his perſon alone. Gragné by forced marches overtook the king upon the Nile at Delakus, the 6th of February, and offered him battle, knowing the proud ſpirit of David, that he would not refuſe, however great the diſproportion was.

The event was ſuch as might be expected. Fortune again declared againſt the king. Negadé Yaſous, Acab Saat, and many others of the nobility periſhed, fighting to the laſt, in the ſight of their ſovereign. In this battle the brave monk, Andreas *, much advanced in years, was ſlain, behaving with the greateſt gallantry, unwilling to ſurvive the ruin of his country.

The

* It was he who, as we have ſeen, ſlew the Moor Maſſudi in ſingle combat in the beginning of this reign.

The Moors now found it unneceſſary to keep together an army. They divided into ſmall parties, that they might more effectually and ſpeedily ruin the country. Part of the Gragné's army was detached to burn Axum; the other under Simeon continued in Amhara to watch the king's motions; and, while he attempted to relieve Axum, diſperſed his army, on which the town was burnt, and with it many of the richeſt churches in Abyſſinia, Hallelujah, Banquol, Gaſo, Debra Kerbé, and many others. And, on the 7th of April, Saul, ſon of Tesfo Yaſous, fought another detachment of the Mooriſh army, and was cut to pieces.

The 28th year of his reign, 1536, the king croſſed the Tacazzé, and had many diſaſtrous encounters with the people of Siré and Serawé. Tesfo l'Oul, who commanded in this latter province for the king, ſurpriſed a Turkiſh party under Adli, whom he ſlew, and met the ſame fate himſelf from Abbas, Mooriſh governor of Serawé, when a great many of the principal people of that province were there ſlain. Galila, a large iſland in the lake Tzana, was plundered, and the convent upon it burnt. It was one of the principal places where the Abyſſinians hid their treaſure, and a great booty was found there.

In the following year, Gragne, in a meſſage repreſented to him, that he might ſee he was fighting againſt God, exhorting him to be wiſe, and make his peace in time, which he ſhould have upon the condition of giving him his daughter in marriage, and he would then withdraw his army, otherwiſe he would never leave Abyſſinia till he had reduced

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it to a condition of producing nothing but graſs. But the king, nothing daunted, returned him for anſwer, That he was an infidel, and a blaſphemer, uſed as an inſtrument to chaſtiſe him and his people for their many ſins; that it was his duty to bear the correction patiently; but that it would ſoon happen, when this juſt purpoſe was anſwered, that he would be deſtroyed, and all thoſe with him, as ſuch wicked inſtruments had always been; that he the king, and Abyſſinia his kingdom, would be preſerved as a monument of the mercy of God, who never entirely forſook his people, though he might chaſtiſe them.

Indeed, the condition of the country was now ſuch that a total deſtruction ſeemed to be at hand; for a famine and plague, its conſtant companion, raged in Abyſſinia, carrying off thoſe that the ſword had ſpared.

Gideon and Judith, king and queen of the Jews, in the high country of Samen, after having ſuffered much from Gragne, had at laſt rebelled and joined him; and the king, who it ſeems continued to ſhew an inclination to the Catholic church, which he had imbibed during the embaſſy of Don Roderigo, by this had occaſioned many to fall off from him, he and the court obſerving Eaſter according to the Roman kalendar, while the reſt of the clergy and kingdom continued firm to that of Alexandria.

At this time Oſman of Dawaro, Jonadab, Kefla, Youſef, and other rebel Abyſſinians, part of Ammer's army, one of Gragne's generals, ſurpriſed the king's eldeſt ſon, Victor, going to join his father

ther the 7th day of March; ſlew him, and diſperſed his army. Three days after, the king himſelf came to action, with Ammer at Zaat in Waag, but he was there again beaten, and his youngeſt ſon Menas was takén priſoner. The king had ſcarce now an attendant, and, being almoſt alone, he took refuge among the rocks and buſhes in a high mountain called *Tſalem*, in the diſtrict of Tſalamet. But he had not remained above a day there, when he was followed by Joram, (rebel-maſter of that diſtrict) and narrowly eſcaped being taken as he was croſſing the Tacazze on foot and alone; whence he took refuge on mount Tabor, a very high mountain in Sire, and there he paſſed the winter.

The amazing ſpirit and conſtancy of the king, who alone ſeemed not to forſake the cauſe of his kingdom, who now, without children or army, ſtill ſingly, made war for the liberty of his country, aſtoniſhed all Abyſſinia as well friends as enemies. Every ſoldier, therefore, that could eſcape the ſmall parties of the Moors which ſurrounded the king, joined him at Tabor, and he was again at the head of a very ſmall, but brave body of troops, though it was ſcarcely known in what part of the kingdom he was hid. When Achmet-eddin, lieutenant of Ammer, paſſed through Sire, loaded with the ſpoils of the churches and towns he had plundered, the king, finding him within his reach, deſcended from the mountain, and, by a ſudden march, ſurpriſed and ſlew him with his own hand, leaving the greateſt part of his army dead on the field. After which he diſtributed the booty among his ſmall army.

Ammer,

Ammer, the king's mortal enemy, who had taken upon himſelf the deſtruction of the royal family, deſcended into the province of Sire, and neighbourhood of Tabor, and there indulged himſelf in the moſt wanton cruelties, torturing and murdering the prieſts, burning churches and villages, hoping by this the king would loſe his temper, and leave his ſtrong hold in the mountain. But hearing at the ſame time, that a large quantity of plate, and other treaſure, belonging to the church Debra Kerbe, had been carried into an iſland in the lake Tzana for ſafety, he left the king, and ſeized his booty in the lake to a very great amount.

However, he there fell ill of a fever; but, on his return, was ſo far advanced in his recovery as to reſume his ſchemes of deſtroying the king; when, the night of the 10th of February 1538, while he was ſleeping in bed in his tent, a common ſoldier, from what quarrel or cauſe is not known, went ſecretly and ſtabbed him ſeveral times in the belly with a two-edged knife, ſo that he died inſtantly, to David's great relief, and much to the ſafety of the whole kingdom.

It was now 12 years ſince Don Roderigo de Lima had ſailed from Maſuah, carrying with him Zaga Zaab ambaſſador from the king of Abyſſinia. This embaſſy arrived ſafe in Liſbon, and was received with great magnificence by king John; but, as the circumſtances of the kingdom when he left Maſuah were really flouriſhing, and as the treatment he met in Portugal was better than he had, probably, ever experienced at home, he ſeems to have been in no haſte to put an end to this embaſſy. On the other

ſide,

ſide, the king of Portugal's affairs in India were arrived at that degree of proſperity and power, that little uſe remained for ſuch an ally as the king of Abyſſinia.

The Mooriſh trade and navigation to India had already received a fatal blow, as well from the Portugueſe themſelves, as from the fall of the Mamalukes in Egypt; and Soliman, and his ſervant Sinan Baſha, by their conqueſt, and introducing ſoldiers who had not any idea or talent for trade, but only plunder and rapine, had given a finiſhing ſtroke to what the diſcovery of the Cape of Good Hope began. The filling Arabia with fire-arms and Turks was now of conſequence to none but to David; and of ſuch a conſequence it had been, that, as we have ſeen, in the courſe of 12 years it had left him nothing in Abyſſinia but the bare name of king, and a life ſo precarious that it could not be counted upon from one day's end to the other.

David had detained in Abyſſinia two Portugueſe, one called Maſter John, the other Lazarus d'Andrad a painter, being two of Don Roderigo's train that came from the Indies with him. The Abuna (Mark) was become old and incapable, and, ſince the Turkiſh conqueſt of Egypt, very indifferent to, and unconnected with, what paſſed at Cairo. Before he died, at the king's deſire he had appointed John his ſucceſſor, and accordingly ordained him Abuna, as well as having firſt given him all the inferior orders at once; for John was a layman and ſtudent in phyſic; a very ſimple creature, but a great bigot; and we ſhall from henceforward call him John Bermudes.

John

John very willingly conſented to his ordination, provided the pope approved of it; and he ſet out for Rome, not by the uſual way of India, but through Arabia and Egypt; and, arriving there without accident, was confirmed by Paul III. the then pope, not only as patriarch of Abyſſinia, but of Alexandria likewiſe; to which he added, as Bermudes ſays, the moſt unintelligible and incomprehenſible title of Patriarch of the Sea. Bermudes, to this variety of charges, had this other added to him, of ambaſſador from king David to the court of Portugal; and for this he was certainly very fit, however he might be for his eccleſiaſtical dignities; for he had been now 12 years in Abyſſinia, knew the country well, and had been witneſs of the variety of diſtreſſes which, following cloſe one upon another, had brought this country to its then ſtate of ruin.

While theſe things paſſed in the north of Abyſſinia, a terrible cataſtrophe happened in the ſouth. A Mahometan chief, called Vizir Mudgid, governor of Arar, having an opportunity from his ſituation to hear of the riches which were daily carried from churches, and other places, for ſafety into the mountain of Geſhen, took a reſolution to attempt that natural fortreſs, though in itſelf almoſt impregnable, and ſtrengthened by an army conſtantly encamped at the foot of it.

When Mudgid arrived near the mountain he found it was forſaken by the troops deſtined to guard it; and led by a Mahometan, who was a menial ſervant to the princes above, he aſcended with his troops without oppoſition, putting all the

royal

royal family that were priſoners, and indeed every individual of either ſex reſident there, indiſcriminately to the ſword.

The meaſure of David's misfortunes ſeems to have been now full, and he died accordingly this very year 1540.

It will be neceſſary here to remind the reader, that Alvarez, the chaplain and hiſtorian of the firſt Portugueſe embaſſy, was (as he ſaid) on his return appointed by king David to make his ſubmiſſion to the pope. Leaving Zaga Zaab, therefore, in Portugal, he proceeded to Bologna, where the emperor Charles V. was then in perſon, before whom and the pope himſelf he delivered his credentials framed by Peter Covillan, and afterwards, in a long ſpeech, the reaſons of his embaſſy.

The pope received this ſubmiſſion of David with infinite pleaſure, at a time when ſo many kingdoms in the weſt were revolting from his ſupremacy. He conſidered it as a thing of the greateſt moment to be courted before the emperor by ſo powerful a prince in Africa. But as for the emperor himſelf, though he was then preparing for an expedition againſt the Mahometans, and though it was his favourite war, he ſeems to have been perfectly indifferent either to the embaſſy itſelf, or to the perſon that ſent it; a great proof that he believed there was nothing real in it.

Many other people have doubted whether this embaſſy, or that of John Bermudes, actually came from the Abyſſinian court, as the king would ſcarcely have abandoned the form of the Alexandrian church in which he had been brought up by Abuna

Abuna Mark, then alive. Abuna Mark, moreover, could ſcarcely be believed to have promoted embaſſies which were intended to ſtrike at the root of his own religion, and the patriarchal power with which he was endowed.

But to this it is eaſily anſwered, That the Abyſſinian hiſtorian of David's reign, through the whole courſe of it, readily admits his conſtant attachment to the ſee of Rome. He gives a ſtriking example of it during the war with Gragné, when the king celebrated Eaſter after the manner of the Roman Catholics, though it was to have this certain effect of dividing his kingdom, and alienating the minds of his ſubjects, of whoſe aſſiſtance he was then in the utmoſt need. And as for the Abuna, we are to conſider that Cairo had been taken, and the government, which Abuna Mark owned for the lawful one, had been overturned by the Turks who then poſſeſſed it, and were actually perſecuting the Alexandrian church.

The Abuna, then, and the king alſo, had the ſame reaſon for not applying to Cairo, the ſeat of the Turks their enemies; and, therefore, they more readily accommodated matters with a people from whom only their aſſiſtance could come; and without whom, it was probable, that both the Chriſtian religion and civil government of Abyſſinia would fall together.

It has been ſaid of this king by the European writers who have touched upon the hiſtory of his reign, that he was a prince who had began it in the moſt promiſing manner, but after the death of the empreſs Helena, he had abandoned himſelf to all

ſort of debauchery, and eſpecially that of women; inſomuch, as Mr. Ludolf ſays, he ſuffered his concubines to have idols in his palace. This I take to be a calumny copied from the Portugueſe prieſts, who never forgave him the denial of his writing the letters by Matthew, in which it was ſaid he gave the Portugueſe, or rather king of Portugal, one-third of the kingdom; for he ſucceeded to the crown at 11 years of age, defeated and ſlew Maſſudi when he was about ſixteen; and, when Don Roderigo and the Portugueſe embaſſy were with him, he was then ſomething more than twenty, a very devout, prudent prince, according to the account Alvarez, an eye-witneſs, gives of him; and all this time empreſs Helena was alive.

Again, the very year after the Portugueſe embaſſy left Abyſſinia, that is, in the year 1526, the king was defeated by the Moors, and, from that time to his death, was hunted about the country like a wild beaſt, from rock to rock, very often alone, and at all times ſlenderly attended, till he died, in 1540, at the age of 46; ſo there is no period during his life in which this calumny can be juſtly fixed upon him.

As for the idolatry he is accuſed of ſuffering in his palace among his Pagan miſtreſſes, I cannot recollect any place in the adjoining nations from which he could have brought theſe idolatrous rites or miſtreſſes. The Pagan countries around him profeſs a remnant of ill-underſtood Sabaiſm, worſhipping the ſtars, the moon, and the wind; but I do not, as I ſay, recollect any of theſe bordering on Abyſſinia, who worſhipped idols.

CLAUDIUS,

## CLAUDIUS, OR ATZENAF SEGUED.

From 1540 to 1559.

*Prosperous Beginning of Claudius's Reign—Christopher de Gama lands in Abyssinia—Prevented by the rainy Season from joining the King—Battle of Ainal—Battle of Offalo—Christopher de Gama slain—Battle of Isaac's Bet—Moors defeated, and their General slain—Abyssinian Army defeated—Claudius slain—Remarkable Behaviour of Nur, Governor of Zeyla, General of the Moors.*

CLAUDIUS succeeded his father David III. being yet young, and found the empire in circumstances that would have required an old and experienced prince. But, though young, he possessed those graceful and affable manners which, at first sight, attached people of all sorts to him. He had been tutored with great care by the empress Helena, was expert in all warlike exercises, and brave beyond his years.—So say the Abyssinian annals; and though I have no thought myself warranted to depart from the letter of the context, yet it is my duty to the reader to shew him how this could not be.

Claudius was born about 1522; the empress Helena died in 1525. From this it is plain, the first three years of his life was all that he could be under the tutelage of the empress Helena; and, at so early a period, it is not possible he could receive much advantage. The princess, to whom

he was indebted for his education, was Sabel Wenghel, celebrated in the Abyſſinian hiſtory for wiſdom and courage equal to the empreſs Helena. She was relict of David. We ſhall hereafter ſee her called Helena likewiſe upon another occaſion; but the reader is deſired to have in mind, that this confuſion of perſons is owing only to that of names to be met with almoſt in every reign in the Abyſſinian hiſtory.

Claudius is ſaid likewiſe in theſe annals to have been a child at the time of his acceſſion; but, having been born in 1522, and ſucceeding to the throne in 1540, he muſt have been eighteen years of age; and this cannot be called childhood, eſpecially in Abyſſinia, unleſs, as I have before ſaid, this obſervation of age was relative to the arduous taſk he had in hand, by ſucceeding to a kingdom arrived at the very eve of perdition.

The Moors, notwithſtanding the conſtant ſucceſs they had againſt David, ſtill feared the conſequences of his long experience and undaunted reſolution in the moſt adverſe fortune. They were happy, therefore, in the change of ſuch an enemy, however unfortunate, for a young man ſcarcely yet out of the influence of female government, which had always been favourable to them, and their religion.

A general league was formed without delay among all the Mahometan chiefs to ſurround Claudius, and fall upon him before he was in a ſituation to defend himſelf, and by one ſtroke to put an end to the war. They accordingly ſet about collecting troops from all quarters, but with a degree of inattention and preſumption that ſufficiently ſhewed they

they thought themſelves in no danger. But the young king having good intelligence that vizir Aſa, Oſman, Debra Yaſous, and Joram, (who had ſo nearly taken his father priſoner in the mountain Tſalem) had their quarters near him, and neglected a good look-out, fell upon them, without their knowing what his force was, entirely defeated them, diſperſed their army, and ſtruck a panic into the whole confederacy by the manner this victory was followed up; the king himſelf on horſeback continued the purſuit all that day and night, as alſo the next day, and did not return to his camp till the ſecond evening after his victory, having ſlain without mercy every one that had fallen into his hands, either in the flight, or in the field of battle.

Claudius's behaviour, on this firſt occaſion, raiſed the ſoldiers confidence to a degree of enthuſiaſm. Every man that had ſerved under his father repaired to him with the greateſt alacrity. Above all, the Agows of Laſta came down to him in great troops from their rugged and inacceſſible mountains, the chief of that warlike nation being related to him by his mother.

The king in perſon at the head of his army became now an object of ſuch conſideration as to make the Mahometan chiefs no longer retire as uſual to winter in Adel, but canton themſelves in the ſeveral diſtricts they had conquered in Abyſſinia, and lay aſide the thoughts of farther waſting the country, to defend themſelves againſt ſo active and ſpirited an aſſailant. They agreed then to join their whole forces together, and march to force the king to a battle. Oſman of Ganze, vizir Mudgid who had

had ſettled in Amhara, Saber-eddin *, and all the leſſer rebel officers of Sire and Serawe, effected a junction about the ſame time without oppoſition. Jonathan alone, a rebel of great experience, had not yet appeared with his troops. The king, on the other hand, did not ſeem over anxious to come to an engagement, though his army was every day ready for battle; and his ground was always taken with advantage, ſo that it was almoſt deſperate to pretend to force him.

Jonathan at laſt was on his way to join the confederates; but the king had as early intelligence of his motions as his friends: and, while he was yet two days march diſtant from the camp, the king, leaving his tents ſtanding and his fires lighted, by a forced march in the night came upon him, (while he thought him blocked up by his rebel aſſociates at a diſtance) and, finding Jonathan without preparation or defence, cut his whole army to pieces, ſlew him, and then returned to his own tents as rapidly as he went, having ordered ſmall detachments to continue in the way between him and his camp, patroling, leſt ſome ambuſh ſhould be laid for him by the enemy, who, if they had been informed of his march, though they were too late to prevent the ſucceſs of it, might ſtill have attempted to revenge it.

But intelligence was now given to the Moors with much leſs punctuality and alacrity than formerly. So generally did the king poſſeſs the affections of the country people, that no information came

* Conſtant in the faith.

came to the confederate army till the next day after his return, when, early in the morning, he diſpatched one of the Mooriſh priſoners that he had taken three days before, and ſpared for the purpoſe, carrying with him the head of Jonathan, and a full account of the havock to which he had been a witneſs.

This meſſenger bore alſo the king's defiance to the Moors, whom he challenged, under the odious epithets they deſerved, to meet him; and then actually to ſhew he was in earneſt, marched towards them with his army, which he formed in order of battle. But tho' they ſtood under arms for a conſiderable time, whilſt ſeveral invitations to ſingle combat were ſent from the Chriſtian horſemen, as their cuſtom is, before they engage, or when their camps are near each other, yet the Moors were ſo aſtoniſhed at what had happened, and what they ſaw now before them, that not one officer would adviſe the riſking a battle, nor any one ſoldier accept of the challenge offered. The king then returned to his camp, diſtributed the whole booty among his ſoldiers, and refreſhed them, preſerving a proper ſtation to cover the wounded, whom he ſent off to places of ſecurity.

The king was in the country of Samen in the neighbourhood of Laſta. He then decamped and paſſed the river Tacazze, that he might be nearer thoſe diſtricts of which the Turks had poſſeſſed themſelves. In this march all ſorts of people joined the victorious army. Thoſe that had revolted, and many that had apoſtatized, came without fear and ſurrendered themſelves, truſting to the clemency

mency of the prince. Many of the Moors, natives of Abyſſinia, did the ſame, after having experienced the difference between the mild Chriſtian government, and that of their new maſters, the Moors and Turks of Adel.

The king encamped at Sard, there to paſs his Eaſter; and, as is uſual in the great feſtivals, many of the nobility obtained leave to attend the religious offices of the ſeaſon at home with their families. Ammer, governor of Ganze, who knew the cuſtom of the country, thought this was the time to ſurpriſe the king thinly attended; and it might have ſucceeded, if intelligence of the enemy's deſigns had not been received almoſt as ſoon as they were formed. Claudius, therefore, drawing together ſome of the beſt of his forces, placed himſelf in ambuſh in Ammer's way, who, not ſuſpecting, fell into it with his army, which was totally deſtroyed on the 24th of April 1541. After which the king left his own quarter at Sard and came to Shume.

While things were taking this favourable turn in Abyſſinia, the ambaſſador, John Bermudes, had paſſed from Rome to Liſbon, where he was acknowledged by the king as patriarch of Alexandria, Abyſſinia, and, as he will have it, of the Sea. The firſt thing he did was to give the Portugueſe a ſample of Abyſſinian diſcipline, by putting Zaga Zaab in irons for having waſted ſo much of his time without effecting any of the purpoſes of his embaſſy; but, by the interpoſition of the king, he was ſet at liberty in a few days. Bermudes then fell roundly to the ſubject of his embaſſy, and drew

ſuch

ſuch a picture of the diſtreſſes of Abyſſinia, and inſiſted in his own blunt way ſo violently with the king of Portugal, and the nobility in general, that he procured an order from the king for Don Garcia de Noronha, who was then going out viceroy of the Indies, to ſend 400 Portugueſe muſquete rs from India to the relief of Abyſſinia, and to land them at Maſuah.

John Bermudes, to ſecure the aſſiſtance promiſed, reſolved to embark in the ſame fleet with Don Garcia; but he fell ſick, from poiſon given him, as he apprehends, by Zaga Zaab, and this delayed his embarkation a year. The next year, being recovered of his illneſs, he arrived ſafely at India. In the interim Don Garcia died, and Don Stephen de Gama, who ſucceeded him, did not embrace the ſcheme of the intended ſuccour with ſuch eagerneſs as Bermudes could have wiſhed.

After ſome delay, however, it was reſolved that Don Stephen ſhould himſelf undertake an expedition from India, to burn the Turkiſh gallies that were at Suez. In this, however, Don Stephen was diſappointed. Upon intelligence of the intended viſit, the Turkiſh gallies had been all drawn aſhore. He came after this to the port of Maſuah, where the fleet intended to water; and, for that purpoſe, their boats were ſent to Arkeeko, a ſmall town and fortreſs upon the main-land, where good water may be found. But the Moors and Turks from Zeyla and Adel were now maſters there, who took the 1000 webs of cotton-cloth the captain had ſent to exchange for water and proviſions, and ſent him word back, that his maſter, the king of Adel, was

now

now king of all Ethiopia, and would not ſuffer any further trade to be carried on, but through his ſubjects; if, therefore, the captain of the fleet would make peace with him, he ſhould reſtore the cotton-webs which had been taken, ſupply him plentifully with proviſions, and make amends for the ſixty Portugueſe ſlain on the coaſt near Zeyla: For, upon the fleet's entering the Red Sea, this number of Portugueſe had run away with a boat; and, landing in the kingdom of Adel, where they could procure no water, they were decoyed to give up their arms, and were then all maſſacred.

The captain, Don Stephen, ſaw the trap laid for him by the Moors, and, reſolving to pay them in their own coin, he returned this anſwer to their meſſage, "That he was very willing to trade with the Mooriſh officer, but did not demand reſtitution of the clothes, as they were taken in fair war. As for the ſixty Portugueſe, they had met the death they deſerved, as being traitors and deſerters: That he now ſent a thouſand more clothes, deſiring water and proviſions, eſpecially live cattle; and that, as it was now the time of their feſtival, he would treat with them for peace, and bring his goods aſhore as ſoon as the holidays were over."

This being agreed to on both ſides, with equal bad faith and intention towards each other, and Don Stephen having obtained his refreſhments, he ſtrictly forbade any further communication with the ſhore. He then ſelected a body of ſix hundred men, the command of whom he gave to Martin Correa, who, in light boats, without ſhewing any fire, landed undiſcovered below Arkeeko, and took poſſeſſion

poſſeſſion of the entrances to the town, putting all that they met with to the ſword. Nur, governor of the province for the king of Adel, fled as ſoon as he had heard the Portugueſe were in the town: He was already in the fields, when Martin Correa ſhot him with a muſquet, and cut off his head, which was ſent before them to the queen, Sabel Wenghel, then in a ſtrong-hold of the province of Tigre, and with her Degdeaſmati (which in common diſcourſe, is called *Kaſmati*) Robel. This was the perſon of that name who had met Don Roderigo in his journey to find the king, and who was now governor of the province. The queen received the Mooriſh general's head with great demonſtrations of joy, conſidering it as an early pledge of future victories.

In the mean time, Don Stephen de Gama, captain of the fleet, began to inrol the men deſtined to march to join Claudius. Four hundred and fifty muſqueteers was the number granted by the king to Bermudes; but an ardent deſire of glory had ſeized all the Portugueſe, and every one ſtrove to be in the nomination for that enterpriſe. All that Don Stephen could do was to chooſe men of the firſt rank for the officers; and theſe, of neceſſity, having many ſervants whom they carried with them, greatly, by this means, encreaſed the number beyond the 450. Don Chriſtopher de Gama, Don Stephen's youngeſt brother, a nobleman of great hopes, was choſen to command this ſmall army of heroes.

A very great murmuring, nevertheleſs, prevailed among thoſe that were refuſed, which was ſcarcely kept in due bounds by the preſence and authority of

of the governor Don Stephen himſelf. And from this honourable emulation, and the diſcontent theſe brave ſoldiers who were left behind ſhewed, the bay where the galleys rode in the harbour of Maſuah, on board which this council was held, is called to this day *Bahia dos Agravados*, the Bay of Wronged or Injured People, ſometimes miſinterpreted the Bay *of the Sick*.

The army under Don Chriſtopher marched to Arkeeko, where the next day came the Governor Don Stephen, and the principal officers of the fleet, and took leave of their countrymen; and, after receiving the bleſſing of Don John Bermudes, *Patriarch of the Sea*, the governor and reſt of the Portugueſe embarked, and returned to India.

Don Chriſtopher, with the greateſt intrepidity, began his march towards Dobarwa, the eaſieſt entrance into Abyſſinia, though ſtill over rugged and almoſt inacceſſible mountains. The Baharnagaſh had orders to attend him, and furniſh this little army with cattle both for their proviſion and carriages; and this he actually performed. But the carriages of the ſmall train of artillery giving way in this bad road, and there being nobody at hand to aſſiſt them with freſh ones in caſe the old failed, Gama made certain carriages of wood after the pattern of thoſe they had brought from Portugal; and, as iron was a very ſcarce commodity in Abyſſinia, he made them ſplit in pieces ſome barrels of old and uſeleſs firelocks for the wheels with which they were to draw the artillery.

The queen, without delay, came forward to join Don Chriſtopher; who, hearing ſhe was at hand, went

went to meet her a league from the city with drums beating and colours flying, and ſaluted her with a general diſcharge of fire-arms, which terrified her much. Her two ſiſters accompanied her, and a number of attendants of both ſexes. Don Chriſtopher, at the head of his ſoldiers, paid his compliments with equal gallantry and reſpect. The queen was covered from head to foot, but lifted up her veil, ſo that her face could be ſeen by him; and he, on the other hand, appointed a hundred muſqueteers for her guard; and thus they returned to Dobarwa mutually ſatisfied with this their firſt interview.

Don Chriſtopher marched from Dobarwa eight days through a very rugged country, endeavouring, if poſſible, to bring about a junction with the king. And it was in this place, while he was encamped, that he received a meſſage from the Mooriſh general, full of opprobrious expreſſions, which was anſwered in much the ſame manner. Don Chriſtopher continued his march as much as he could on account of the rains; and Gragne, whoſe greateſt deſire was to prevent the junction, followed him into Tigre. Neither army deſired to avoid the other, and they were both marching to the ſame point; ſo that on the 25th of March 1542, they came in ſight of each other at Ainal, a ſmall village in the country of the Baharnagaſh.

The Mooriſh army conſiſted of 1000 horſemen, 5000 foot, 50 Turkiſh muſqueteers, and a few pieces of artillery. Don Chriſtopher, beſides his 450 muſqueteers, had about 12,000 Abyſſinians, moſtly foot, with a few bad horſe commanded by the Baharnagaſh,

harnagaſh, and Robel governor of Tigre. Don Chriſtopher, whoſe principal view was a junction with the king, though he did not decline fighting, yet, like a good officer, he choſe to do it as much as poſſible upon his own terms; and, therefore, as the enemy exceeded greatly in the number of horſe, he poſted himſelf ſo as to make the beſt of his fire-arms and artillery. And well it was that he did ſo, for the Abyſſinians ſhewed the utmoſt terror when the firing began on both ſides.

Gragne, mounted on a bay horſe, advancing too near Don Chriſtopher's line that he might ſee if in any part it was acceſſible to his cavalry, and being known by his dreſs to be an officer of diſtinction, he was ſhot at by Peter de Sa, a Portugueſe markſman, who killed his horſe, and wounded the rider in the leg. This occaſioned a great confuſion, and would probably have ended in a defeat of the Moors, had not the Portugueſe general alſo been wounded immediately after by a ſhot. Don Chriſtopher, to ſhew his confidence of victory, ordered his men forthwith to pitch their tents, upon which the Moors retired with Gragne (whom they had mounted on another horſe) without being purſued, the Abyſſinians having contented themſelves with being ſpectators of the battle.

Don Chriſtopher, with his army and the empreſs, now entered into winter-quarters at Affalo; nor did Gragne depart to any diſtance from him, but took up his quarters at Zabul, in hopes always to fight the Portugueſe before it was poſſible for them to effect a junction with the king. The winter paſſed in a mutual intercourſe of correſpondence and

and confidence between the king and Don Chriſtopher, and in determining upon the beſt ſcheme to purſue the war with ſucceſs. Don Chriſtopher and the queen were both of opinion, that, conſidering the ſmall number of Portugueſe firſt landed, and their diminution by fighting, and a ſtrange climate, it was riſking every thing to defer a junction till the winter was over.

The Mooriſh general was perfectly of the ſame opinion; therefore, as ſoon as the king began his march from Dembea, Gragne advanced to Don Chriſtopher's camp, and placed himſelf between the Portugueſe army and that of the king, drawing up his troops before the camp, and defying the Portugueſe to march out, and fight, in the moſt opprobrious language. Don Chriſtopher, in a long catalogue of virtues which he poſſeſſed to a very eminent degree, had not the ſmalleſt claim to that of patience, ſo very neceſſary to thoſe that command armies. He was brave to a fault; raſh and vehement; jealous of what he thought military honour; and obſtinate in his reſolutions, which he formed in conſequence. The defiance of this barbarian, at which an old general would have laughed, made him utterly forget the reaſons he himſelf frequently alleged, and the arguments uſed by the queen, which the king's approach daily ſtrengthened, that it was riſking every thing to come to a battle till the two armies had joined. He had, however, from no other motive but Gragne's inſolence, formed his reſolution to fight, without waiting a junction; and accordingly the 30th of Auguſt, early in the morning, having choſen his ground

to

to the beſt advantage, he offered battle to the Mooriſh army.

Gragne, by preſents ſent to the baſha of Zibid, had doubled his number of horſe, which now conſiſted of 2000. He had got likewiſe 100 Turkiſh muſqueteers, an infinite number of foot, and a train of artillery more numerous and complete than ever had been ſeen before in Abyſſinia. The queen, frightened at the preparation for the battle, fled, taking with her the Portugueſe patriarch, who ſeemed to have as little inclination as ſhe had to ſee the iſſue of the day. But Don Chriſtopher, who knew well the bad effects this example would have, both on Abyſſinians and Portugueſe, ſent twenty horſe, and brought them both back; telling the patriarch it was a breach of duty he would not ſuffer, for him to withdraw until he had confeſſed him, and given the army abſolution before the action with the Infidels.

The battle was fought on the 30th of Auguſt with great fury and obſtinacy on both ſides. The Portugueſe had ſtrewed, early in the morning, all the front of their line with gun-powder, to which, on the approach of the Turks, they ſet fire by trains, which burnt and diſabled a great many of them; and things bore a proſperous appearance, till the Mooriſh general ordered ſome artillery to be pointed againſt the Abyſſinians, who, upon hearing the firſt exploſion, and ſeeing the effect of ſome balls that had lighted among them, fled, and left the Portugueſe to the number only of 400, who were immediately ſurrounded by the Mooriſh army. Nor did Gragne purſue the fugitives, his affair

fair being with the Portugueſe, the ſmallneſs of whoſe number promiſed they would fall an eaſy and certain ſacrifice. He therefore, attacked their camp upon every ſide with very little ſucceſs, having loſt moſt of his beſt officers, till, unfortunately, Don Chriſtopher, fighting and expoſing himſelf every where, was ſingled out by a Turkiſh ſoldier, and ſhot through the arm. Upon this all his men turned their thoughts from their own preſervation to that of their general, who obſtinately refuſed to fly, till he was by force put upon a litter, and ſent off, together with the patriarch and queen.

Night now coming on, Don Chriſtopher had got into a wood in which there was a cave. There he ordered himſelf to be ſet down to have his wounds dreſſed; which, being done, he was urged by the queen and patriarch to continue his flight. But he had formed his reſolution, and, without deigning to give his reaſons, he obſtinately refuſed to retreat a ſtep farther. In vain the queen, and thoſe that knew the country, told him he was juſt in the tract of the Mooriſh horſemen, who would not fail ſoon to ſurround him. He repeated his reſolution of ſtaying there with ſuch a degree of firmneſs, that the queen and patriarch, who had no great deſire for martyrdom, left him to his fate, which preſently overtook him.

In one of Don Chriſtopher's expeditions to the mountains, he had taken a very beautiful woman, wife to a Turkiſh officer, whom he had ſlain. This lady had made a ſhew of converſion to Chriſtianity; lived with him afterwards, and was treated by him with the utmoſt tenderneſs. It was ſaid, that,

after he was wounded and began to fly, this woman had given him his route, and promiſed to overtake him with friends that would carry him to a place of ſafety. Accordingly, ſome ſervants left by the queen, hidden among the rocks, to watch what might befal him, and aſſiſt him if poſſible, ſaw a woman, in the dawn of the morning, come to the cave, and return into the wood immediately, whence there ruſhed out a body of Mooriſh horſe, who went ſtraight to the cave and found Don Chriſtopher lying upon the ground ſorely wounded. Upon the firſt queſtion that was aſked him, he declared his name, which ſo overjoyed the Moors, that they gave over further purſuit, and returned with the priſoner they had taken. Don Chriſtopher was brought into the preſence of the Mooriſh general, Gragne, who loaded him with reproaches; to which he replied with ſuch a ſhare of invectives, that the Moor, in the violence of his paſſion, drew his ſword and cut off his head with his own hand. His head was ſent to Conſtantinople, and parts of his body to Zibid and other quarters of Arabia.

The Portugueſe camp was now taken, and all the wounded found in it were put to death. The women, from their fear, having retired all into Don Chriſtopher's tent, the Turks began to indulge themſelves in their uſual exceſſes towards their captives, when a noble Abyſſinian woman, who had been married to a Portugueſe, ſeeing the ſhocking treatment that was awaiting them, ſet fire to ſeveral barrels of gunpowder that were in the tent, and

and at once deſtroyed herſelf, her companions, and thoſe that were about to abuſe them.

The queen and the patriarch, after travelling through moſt difficult ways, and being hoſpitably entertained wherever they paſſed, at laſt took up their reſidence in the Jews mountain, a place inacceſſible in point of ſtrength, having but one entrance, and that very difficult, being alſo defended by a multitude of inhabitants who dwell on a large plain on the top of that mountain, where there is plenty of ſpace to plow and ſow, and a large ſtream of water that runs through the whole of it. Here they ſtaid two months, as well to repoſe themſelves as to give the king time to relieve them. After hearing that he was in motion, they left the mountain of the Jews, and met him on his march towards them.

Claudius ſhewed great ſigns of ſorrow for the death of Don Chriſtopher, and mourned three days. He then ſent 3000 ounces of gold to be divided among the Portugueſe, who, in the place of Don Chriſtopher, had elected Alphonſo Caldeyra for their captain. Theſe all flocked about the king, demanding that he would lead them to battle, that they might revenge the death of Don Chriſtopher. Soon after which, Alphonſo Caldeyra, exerciſing a horſe in the field, was thrown off and died of the fall. In his place was elected Arius Dias, a Portugueſe, born at Coimbra, whoſe mother was a black; he was very much favoured by the king, who now began to cultivate particular parties among the Portugueſe, in order to divide them, and looſen their

attachment for their patriarch, religion, and country.

The king marched from Samen to Shawada, where the Mooriſh army came in full force to meet him. They were not, however, thoſe formidable troops that had defeated and taken Don Chriſtopher: For the Turkiſh ſoldiers, who were the ſtrength of the army, expecting to have ſhared a great ſum each for Don Chriſtopher's ranſom thought themſelves exceedingly injured by the manner in which he was put to death; and they had accordingly all to a man returned into Arabia, leaving Gragné to fight his own battles for his own profit. Nor was Claudius ignorant of this; and having collected all his army he gave the Moors battle on the 15th of November in a plain called Woggora, on the top of Lamalmon, in which the Moors, notwithſtanding their recent victory, were not long in yielding to the ſuperiority of the king's troops.

The loſs of the day was not inconſiderable. Mahomet, Oſman, and Talil, three Mooriſh leaders, famous for their ſucceſſes againſt David the king's father, were this day ſlain in the field.

Claudius now deſcended into the low country of Derſegué, a very plentiful province, to which the Moors always retreated to ſtrengthen themſelves after any misfortune. This the king utterly deſtroyed; while Gragné did the ſame with thoſe countries in Dembea that had been recovered by the king. Claudius then returned to Shawada, and Gragné to Derſegué. After that the king marched to Wainadega, and Gragné, leaving Derſegué, advanced

vanced ſo near the king's army, that the outpoſts were nearly in ſight of each other. In ſuch a poſition of two ſuch armies a battle became inevitable.

Accordingly, on the 10th of Feb. 1543, in the morning, the king, whoſe quarters were at Iſaac's Bet, having well refreſhed his army, marched out of his camp, and offered the enemy battle. The Portugueſe, ever mindful of Don Chriſtopher, fought with a bravery like to deſperation, and the preſence of the king keeping the Abyſſinians in their duty, the van of Gragne's army was puſhed back upon the centre, and much confuſion was like to follow, till Gragne advanced alone before them, waving and beckoning with his hands to his men that they ſhould follow; and he was already come ſo near the Portugueſe line as to be eaſily known and diſtinguiſhed by them.

Peter Lyon, a man of low ſtature, but very active and valiant, who had been valet-de-chambre to Don Chriſtopher, having crept unſeen along the courſe of a river a conſiderable ſpace nearer, to make his aim more certain, ſhot Gragne with his muſquet, ſo that the ball went through his body in the moment that both armies joined. Gragne, finding that his wound was mortal, rode aſide from the preſſure of the troops towards a ſmall thicket, and was cloſely followed by Peter Lyon, who ſaw him fall dead from his horſe; and, deſirous ſtill to do further ſervice in the battle, he would not incumber himſelf with his head, but cutting off one of the ears, he put it in his pocket, and returned to the action. The Mooriſh army no ſooner miſſ-

ed

ed the preſence of their general, than concluding all loſt, they fell into confuſion, and were purſued by the Portugueſe and Abyſſinians with a great ſlaughter, till the evening.

The next morning, in ſurveying the dead, the body of Gragne was found by an Abyſſinian officer, who cut his head off, and brought it to the king, who received him with great honour and promiſe of reward. Peter Lyon ſtood a ſilent ſpectator of the impudence of his competitor; but Arius Dias, who knew the fact, deſired the king's attention; ſaying, at the ſame time, "That he believed his majeſty knew Gragne well enough to ſuppoſe that he would not ſuffer any man to cut off his ear, without having it in his power to ſever his head alſo; and conſequently, that the ear muſt be in poſſeſſion of a better man than he that had brought his head to the camp." Upon this, Peter Lyon pulled the ear out of his pocket, and laid it at the king's feet, amidſt the acclamations of all preſent, for his bravery in revenging his old maſter's death, and his modeſty in being content with having done ſo, without pretending to any other reward.

In this battle, a ſon of Gragne was taken priſoner, with many other conſiderable officers; and Del Wumbarea, wife of Gragne, with Nur ſon of Mudgid, and a few troops, were obliged to throw themſelves, for ſafety, among the wilds and woods of Atbara, thereby eſcaping with great difficulty.

The king had now ample revenge of all the Mooriſh leaders who had reduced his father to ſuch extremities, excepting Joram who had driven the king from his hiding-place on mount Tſalem, and

forced

forced him to croſs the Tacazze on foot, with equal danger of being drowned or taken. This leader had, much againſt his will, been detained from the laſt battle, but, hoping to be ſtill in time, was advancing by forced marches. The king, informed of his route, detached a party of his army to meet him before the news of the battle could reach him. They having placed themſelves in ambuſh, he fell into it with his army, and was cut to pieces: this completed Claudius's account with his father's enemies.

During the late war with Gragne, the provinces of Tigre and Sire had been the principal ſeat of the war. They were immediately in the way between Dembea, Maſuah, and the other Mooriſh poſts upon the Red Sea; the enemy had croſſed them in all directions, and a proportionable devaſtation had been the conſequence. Gragne had burnt Axum, and deſtroyed all the churches and convents in Tigre. The king, now delivered from this enemy, had applied ſeriouſly to repair the ravages which had been made in the country. For this purpoſe he marched with a ſmall army towards Axum, intending afterwards an expedition againſt the Galla.

It was in the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, while he was at Sire, that there happened a very remarkable eclipſe of the ſun, which threw both court and army into great conſternation. The prophets and diviners, ignorant monks of the deſert, did not let ſlip ſo favourable an opportunity of increaſing their conſequence by augmenting this panic, and declaring this eclipſe to portend nothing leſs than the renewal of the Mooriſh war. The

year,

year, however, paſſed in tranquillity and peace. Two old women, relations of the king, are ſaid to have died; and it was in this great calamity that theſe diviners were to look for the completion of their prophecies. It is from this, however, that I have taken an opportunity to compare and rectify the dates of the principal tranſactions in the Abyſſinian hiſtory. Sire, where the king then reſided, was a point very favourable for this application; for in my journey from Maſuah to Gondar, I had ſettled the latitude and longitude of that town by many obſervations.

On the 22d of January 1770, at night, by a medium of different paſſages of ſtars over the meridian, and by an obſervation of the ſun the noon of the following day, I found the latitude to be 14° 4′ 35″ north, and the evening of the 23d, I obſerved an emerſion of the firſt ſatellite of Jupiter, and by this I concluded the longitude of Sire to be 38° 0′ 15″ eaſt of the meridian of Greenwich.

The 13th year of the reign of Claudius falls to be in the 1553, and I find that there was a remarkable eclipſe of the ſun that did happen that ſame year on the 24th of January N. S. which anſwers to the 18th of the Ethiopic month Teir. The circumſtances of this eclipſe were as follow:

| | *H.* | *M.* | *S.* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beginning, - | 7 | 21 | 0 | A. M. |
| Middle, - | 8 | 40 | 0 | |
| End, - - | 10 | 1 | 0 | |

The quantity of the ſun's diſk obſcured was 10 digits; ſo that this was ſo near to a total eclipſe, it muſt

muſt have made an impreſſion on the ſpectator's minds that ſufficiently accounts for the alarm and apprehenſions it occaſioned.

In the month of January, nothing can be more beautiful than the ſky in Sire; not a cloud appears; the ſky is all of a pale azure, the colour lighter than an European ſky, and of inexpreſſible beauty. The manner of applying this eclipſe I ſhall mention hereafter.

Eclipſes of the moon do not ſeem to be attended to in Abyſſinia. The people are very little out in the night, inſomuch that I do not find one of theſe recorded throughout their hiſtory. The circumſtances of the ſeaſon make even thoſe of the ſun ſeldomer viſible than in other climates, for in the rainy ſeaſon, from April to September, the heavens are conſtantly overcaſt with clouds, ſo that it is mere accident if they can catch the moment it happens. But in the month of Teir, that is December and January, the ſky is perfectly ſerene and clear, and at this time our eclipſe above mentioned happened.

The king now took into his conſideration the ſtate of the church. He had ſent for an Abuna from Cairo to ſucceed Abuna Marcus, and he was now in his way to Abyſſinia, while Bermudes, not able to bear this ſlight, on the other hand, publicly declared to the king, that, having been ambaſſador from his father, and made his ſubmiſſion to the Roman pontiff, for himſelf and for his kingdom, he now expected that Claudius would make good his father's engagements, embrace the Roman Catholic religion himſelf, and, without delay, proclaim it as the

the eſtabliſhed religion in Abyſſinia. This the king poſitively refuſed to do, and a converſation enſued, which is repeated by Bermudes himſelf, and ſufficiently ſhews the moderation of the young king, and the fiery, brutal zeal of that ignorant, bigotted, ill-mannered prieſt. Hitherto the Abyſſinians heard the Portugueſe maſs with reverence and attention; and the Portugueſe frequented the Abyſſinian churches with complacency. They intermarried with each other, and the children ſeem to have been chriſtened indifferently by the prieſts of either church. And this might have long continued, had it not been for the impatience of Bermudes.

The king, ſeeing the danger of connecting himſelf with ſuch a man, kept up every appearance of attachment to the Alexandrian church. Yet, ſays the Abyſſinian hiſtorian who writes his life, it was well known that Claudius, in his heart, was a private, but perfect convert, to the Romiſh faith, and kept only from embracing it by his hatred to Bermudes, the conſtant perſuaſion of the empreſs Sabel Wenghel, and the recollection of the misfortunes of his father. Upon being required publicly to ſubmit himſelf to the See of Rome, he declared that he had made no ſuch promiſe; that he conſidered Bermudes as no patriarch, or, at beſt, only patriarch of the Franks; and that the Abuna of Abyſſinia was the chief prieſt acknowledged by him. Bermudes told him, that he was accurſed and excommunicated. Claudius anſwered, that he, Bermudes, was a Neſtorian heretic, and worſhipped four gods. Bermudes anſwered plainly, that he lied; that he would take every Portugueſe from

him.

him, and return to India whence he came. The king's anſwer was, that he wiſhed he would return to India; but as for the Portugueſe, neither they, nor any other perſon ſhould leave his kingdom without his permiſſion. Accordingly, having perfectly gained Arius Dias, he gave him the name of Marcus, with the command of the Portugueſe, and ſent him a ſtandard with his own arms, to uſe inſtead of the king of Portugal's. But the Abyſſinian page being met, on his return, with the Portugueſe ſtandard in his hand, by James Brito, he wreſted it from him, felling him to the ground with a blow of his ſword on the head.

From expoſtulations with the king, the matter of religion turned into diſputes among the prieſts, at which the king always aſſiſted in perſon. If we ſuppoſe they were no better ſuſtained on the part of the Abyſſinians than they were by the patriarch Bermudes, who we know was no great divine, we cannot expect much that was edifying from the arguments that either of them uſed. The Portugueſe ſay *, that the king, ſtruck with the ignorance of his own clergy, frequently took the diſcuſſion upon himſelf, which he managed with ſuch force of reaſoning as often to put the patriarch to a ſtand. From verbal diſputes, which terminated in nothing, Bermudes was reſolved to appeal to arguments in writing; and, with the help of thoſe that were with him of the ſame faith, a fair ſtate of the differences in queſtion was made in a ſmall book, and preſented to the king, who read it with ſo much pleaſure

* Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 27.

pleaſure that he kept it conſtantly by him. This gave very great offence to the Abyſſinian clergy; and the Abuna being now arrived, the king deſired of him liberty to read that book, which he refuſing, put the young king into ſo violent a paſſion that he called the Abuna Mahometan and Infidel to his face.

Things growing worſe and worſe between the Portugueſe and Abyſſinians, by the incendiary ſpirit of the brutiſh Bermudes, from reproaches they came to blows; and this proceeded ſo far, that the Portugueſe one night aſſaulted the king's tent, where they ſlew ſome, and grievouſly wounded others. Upon this, the king, deſirous to eſtrange him a little from the Portugueſe, ſent Bermudes to the country of the Gafats, where he gave him large appointments, in hopes that the natural turbulence of his temper would involve him in ſome difficulties. And there he ſtaid ſeven months, oppreſſing the poor ignorant people, and frightening them with the noiſe of his fire-arms. During this period, the king went on an expedition againſt the Galla; Bermudes then returned to court, where he found that Arius Dias was dead, and a great many of the Portugueſe very well attached to the king. But he began his old work of diſſention, inſomuch that the king determined to baniſh him to a mountain for life.

Gaſpar de Suza now commanded the Portugueſe inſtead of Arius Dias, a man equally beloved by his own nation and the king. By his perſuaſions, and that of Kaſmati Robel, the baniſhment to the mountain was laid aſide; but Bermudes was privately

vately perſuaded to embark for India while it was yet time; and accordingly he repaired to Dobarwa, where he remained two years, as it ſhould ſeem, perfectly quiet, neglected, and forlorn; ſaying daily maſs to ten Portugueſe who had ſettled in that town after the defeat of Don Chriſtopher. He then went to Maſuah, and the monſoon being favourable, he embarked on board a Portugueſe veſſel, carrying with him the ten Portugueſe that were ſettled at Dobarwa, who all arrived ſafely at Goa.

St. Ignatius, founder of the Order of Jeſuits, was then at Rome in the dawn of his holineſs. The converſion of Abyſſinia ſeemed of ſuch conſequence to him, that he reſolved himſelf to go and be the apoſtle of the kingdom. But the pope, who had conceived other hopes of him and his Order more important and nearer at hand, abſolutely refuſed this offer. One of his ſociety, Nugnez Baretto, was, however, fixed upon for patriarch, without any notice being taken of Don John Bermudes. By him Ignatius ſent a letter addreſſed to Claudius, which is to be found in the Collections *. It does not, I think, give us any idea of the ingenuity or invention of that great ſaint. It ſeems moſtly to beg the queſtion, and to contain little elſe than texts of ſcripture for his future miſſionaries to preach and write on, relative to the difference of tenets of the two churches.

With this letter, and a number of prieſts, Baretto came to Goa. But news being arrived there of king Claudius's ſteady averſion to the Catholic church,

* Dated at Rome 16th Feb. 1555. See Tellez, lib. 2. cap. 22.

church, it was then thought better, rather than risk the patriarchal dignity, to send Andrew Oviedo bishop of Hierapolis, and Melchior Carneyro bishop of Nice, with several other priests, as ambassadors from the governor of India to Claudius, with proper credentials. They arrived safely at Masuah in 1558, five days before the Turkish basha came with his fleet and army, and took possession of Masuah and Arkeeko, though these places had been occupied by the Turks two years before.

When the arrival of these Portuguese was intimated to Claudius, he was exceedingly glad, as he considered them as an accession of strength. But when, on opening the letter, he saw they were priests, he was very much troubled, and said, that he wondered the king of Portugal should meddle so much with his affairs; that he and his predecessors knew no obedience due but to the chair of St. Mark, or acknowledged any other patriarch but that of Alexandria; nevertheless, continued he with his usual goodness and moderation, since they are come so far out of an honest concern for me, I shall not fail to send proper persons to receive and conduct them. This he did, and the two bishops and their companions were immediately brought to court. It was at this time that the dispute about the two natures began, in which the king took so considerable a part. He was strenuous, eloquent, and vehement in the discussion; when that was ended, he still preserved his usual moderation and kindness for the Portuguese priests.

Nugnez

Nugnez died in India, and Oviedo ſucceeded him as patriarch to Abyſſinia, it having been ſo appointed by the pope from the beginning of their miſſion.

Claudius had no children; a treaty was therefore ſet on foot, at the inſtance of the empreſs Sabel Wenghel, for ranſoming the prince Menas who had been taken priſoner in his father David's time, and ever ſince kept in confinement among the Moors, upon a high mountain in Adel. The ſame had happened to a ſon of Gragne likewiſe, made priſoner at the battle of Wainadega, when his father was ſlain by Claudius. The Moors ſettled in Abyſſinia, as well as all the Abyſſinian rebels who had forſaken their allegiance or religion during the war, were to a man violently againſt ſetting Menas at liberty, for he was the only brother Claudius had, and a diſputed ſucceſſion was otherwiſe probable, which was what the Moors longed for. Beſides this, Menas was exceedingly brave, of a ſevere and cruel temper, a mortal enemy to the Mahometans, and at this time in the flower of his age, and perfectly fit to govern. It was not, then, by any means, an eligible meaſure for thoſe who were naturally the objects of his hatred, to provide ſuch an aſſiſtant and ſucceſſor to Claudius.

Del Wumbarea thought, that, having loſt her huſband, to be deprived of her ſon likewiſe, was more than fell to her ſhare in the common cauſe. She, too, had therefore applied to the baſha of Maſuah, who looked no farther than to a ranſom, and cared very little what prince reigned in Abyſſinia. He, therefore, undertook the management of the matter,

matter, and declared that he would ſend Menas to the Grand Signior, as ſoon as an anſwer ſhould come from Conſtantinople, while Claudius proteſted, that he would give up Gragne's ſon to the Portugueſe, if the ranſom for his brother was not immediately agreed on. This reſolution, on both ſides, quickly removed all objections. Four thouſand ounces of gold were paid to the Moors and the baſha; Menas was releaſed and ſent home to Claudius, who thereupon, in his turn, ſet Ali Gerad, ſon of Gragne by Del Wumbarea, at liberty, and with him Waraba Guta brother of the king of Adel, and this finiſhed the tranſaction.

I muſt here obſerve, that what Bermudes * ſays, that Del Wumbarea was taken priſoner and given in marriage to Arius Dias, was but a fable, as appears both from the beginning and ſequel of the narrative. Del Wumbarea having thus obtained her ſon, took a very early opportunity of ſhewing ſhe had not yet forgot the father. Nur, governor of Zeyla, ſon of Mudgid, who had ſlain the princes impriſoned upon the mountain of Geſhen, was deeply in love with this lady, and had deſerved well of her, for he had aſſiſted her in making her eſcape into Atbara that day her huſband was ſlain. But this heroine had conſtantly refuſed to liſten to any propoſals; nay, had vowed ſhe never would give her hand in marriage to any man till he ſhould firſt bring her the head of Claudius who had ſlain her huſband. Nur willingly accepted the condition, which gave him few rivals, but rather ſeemed to

* See Bermudes's account of theſe times, printed at Liſbon by Francis Correa, A. D. 1565.

to be reſerved for him, and out of the power of every one elſe.

Claudius, before this, had marched towards Adel, when he received a meſſage from Nur, that, though Gragne was dead, there ſtill remained a governor of Zeyla, whoſe family was choſen as a particular inſtrument for ſhedding the blood of the Abyſſinian princes; and deſired him, therefore, to be prepared, for he was ſpeedily to ſet out to come to him. Claudius had been employed in various journies through different parts of his kingdom, repairing the churches which Gragne and the other Moors had burnt; and he was then rebuilding that of Debra Werk† when this meſſage of Nur was brought to him. This prince was of a temper never to avoid a challenge; and if he did not march againſt Nur immediately, he ſtaid no longer than to complete his army as far as poſſible. He then began his march for Adel, very much, as it is ſaid, againſt the advice of his friends.

That ſuch advice ſhould be given, at this particular time, appears ſtrange; for till now he had been conſtantly victorious, and his kingdom was perfectly obedient, which was not the caſe when any one of the former battles had been fought. But many prophecies were current in the camp, that the king was to be unfortunate this campaign, and was to loſe his life in it. Theſe unfortunate rumours tended much to diſcourage the army, at the ſame time that they ſeemed to have a contrary effect on the king, and to confirm him in his reſo-



† The Mountain of Gold.

lution to fight. The truth is, the clergy, who had ſeen the country delivered by him from the Mahometans in a manner almoſt miraculous, and the conſtancy with which he withſtood the Romiſh patriarch, and fruſtrated the deſigns of his father againſt the Alexandrian church, and who had experienced his extreme liberality in rebuilding the churches, had wrought his young mind to ſuch a degree of enthuſiaſm that he was often heard to ſay, he preferred a death in the middle of an army of infidels to the longeſt and moſt proſperous life that ever fell to the lot of man. It needed not a prophet to have foretold the likely iſſue of a battle in theſe circumſtances, where the king, careleſs of life, rather ſought death than victory; where the number of Portugueſe was ſo ſmall as to be incapable, of themſelves, to effect any thing; where, even of that number, thoſe that were attached to the king were looked upon as traitors by thoſe of the party of the patriarch; and where the Abyſſinians, from their repeated quarrels and diſputes, heartily hated them all.

The armies were drawn up and ready to engage, when the chief prieſt of Debra Libanos came to the king to tell him a dream, or viſion, which warned him not to fight; but the Moors were then advancing, and the king on horſeback made no reply, but marched briſkly forward to the enemy. The cowardly Abyſſinians, upon the firſt fire, fled, leaving the king engaged in the middle of the Mooriſh army with twenty horſe and eighteen Portugueſe muſqueteers, who were all ſlain around his perſon; and he himſelf fell, after fighting manfully,

and

and receiving twenty wounds. His head was cut off, and by Nur delivered to Del Wumbarea, who directed it to be tied by the hair to a branch of a tree before her door, that ſhe might keep it conſtantly in ſight. Here it remained three years, till it was purchaſed from her by an Armenian merchant, her firſt grief, having, it is probable, ſubſided upon the acquiſition of a new huſband. The merchant carried the head to Antioch, and buried it there in the ſepulchre of a ſaint of the ſame name.

Thus died king Claudius in the 19th year of his reign, who, by his virtues and capaciyt, might hold a firſt place among any ſeries of kings we have known, victorious in every action he fought, except in that one only in which he died. A great ſlaughter was made after this among the routed, and many of the firſt nobility were ſlain in endeavouring to eſcape; among the reſt, the dreamer from Debra Lebanos, his viſion, by which he knew the king's death, not having extended ſo far as to reveal his own. The Abyſſinians immediately transferred the name of this prince into their catalogue of Saints, and he is called St. Claudius in that country to this day. Though endowed with every other virtue that entitled him to his place in the kalendar, he ſeems to have wanted one—that of dying in charity with his enemies.

This battle was fought on the 22d March 1559; and the victory gained by Nur was a complete one. The king and moſt of his principal officers were ſlain; great part of the army taken priſoners, the reſt diſperſed, and the camp plundered; ſo that no Mooriſh general had ever returned home with the

glory that he did. But afterwards, in his behaviour, he exhibited a ſpectacle more memorable, and that did him more honour than the victory itſelf; for, when he drew near to Adel, he clothed himſelf in poor attire like a common ſoldier, and bareheaded, mounted on an ordinary mule, with an old ſaddle and tattered accoutrements, he forbade the ſongs and praiſe with which it is uſual to meet conquerors in that country when returning with victory from the field. He declined alſo all ſhare in the ſucceſs of that day, declaring that the whole of it was due to God alone, to whoſe mercy and immediate interpoſition he owed the deſtruction of the Chriſtian army.

The unworthy and unfortunate John Bermudes having arrived in Portugal from India, continued there till his death; and, in the inſcription over his tomb, is called only *Patriarch of Alexandria.* Yet it is clear, from the hiſtory of theſe times, that he was firſt ordained by the old patriarch Marcus; and that the pope, Paul III. only confirmed the ordination of this heretical ſchiſmatical prelate, though we have ſtated that he was ordained by the pope, according to his own aſſertion, to be patriarch of Alexandria, Abyſſinia, and the Sea. Bermudes lived many years after this, and never reſigned any of his charges.

However, on his arrival in Europe, ſeveral ſuppoſed well-meaning perſons at Rome began to diſcourſe among themſelves, as if the converſion of Abyſſinia had not had a fair trial when truſted in the hands of ſuch a manas Bermudes. Scandalous ſtories as to his moral character were propagated at Rome to ſtrengthen

en this. He was ſaid to have ſtolen a golden cup in Abyſſinia*; but this does not appear to me in any ſhape probable, or like the manners of the man. He was a ſimple, ill-bred zealot, exceedingly vain, but in no wiſe coveting riches or gain of any ſort. Sebaſtian king of Portugal, hearing the bad poſture of the Catholic religion in Abyſſinia, and the ſmall hopes of the converſion of that country, beſought the pope to ſend all the miſſionaries that were in that kingdom to preach the goſpel in Japan: but Oviedo ſtated ſuch ſtrong reaſons in his letter to Rome, that he was confirmed in the miſſion of Ethiopia.

* Purch. vol. 2.

MENAS,

## MENAS, OR ADAMAS SEGUED.

From 1559 to 1563.

*Babarnagaſh rebels, proclaims Taſcar King—Defeated by the King—Cedes Dobarwa to the Turks, and makes a League with the Baſha of Maſuah.*

MENAS ſucceeded his brother Claudius, and found his kingdom in almoſt as great confuſion as it had been left by his father David. His firſt campaign was againſt Radaet the Jew. The king attacked him at his ſtrongeſt poſt in Samen, where he fought him with various ſucceſs; and the enterpriſe did not ſeem much advanced, when a hermit, reſiding in theſe mountains, probably tired with the neighbourhood of ſuch troubleſome people, came and told the king, it had been revealed to him that the conqueſt of the Jews was not allotted to him, nor was their time yet come.

While the king ſeemed diſpoſed to avail himſelf of the hermit's warning, as a decent excuſe to get rid of an affair that did not ſucceed to his mind, an accident happened which determined him to quit his preſent undertaking. Two men, ſhepherds of Ebenaat in Beleſſen, from what injury is not known, engaged two of the king's ſervants, who were their relations, to introduce them into Menas's tent while ſleeping, with a deſign to murder him in his bed. While they were preparing to execute their intention, one of them ſtumbled over the lamp that was burning, and threw it down.

down. The king awakening, and challenging him with a loud voice, the aſſaſſin ſtruck at him with his knife, but ſo feebly, from the fright, that he dropt the weapon upon the king's cloak without hurting him. They fled immediately out of the tent, but were taken at Ebenaat the next day, and brought back to the king, who gave orders to the judges to try them: they were both condemned, the one to be thruſt through with lances, the other to be ſtoned to death; after which, both their bodies were thrown to the dogs and to the beaſts of the field, as is practiſed conſtantly in all caſes of high-treaſon.

The ſecond year of the reign of Menas was uſhered in by a conſpiracy among the principal men of his court, at the head of which was Iſaac Baharnagaſh, an old and tried ſervant of his brother Claudius. This officer had been treated ill by Menas in the beginning of his reign; and, knowing the prince's violent and cruel diſpoſition, he could not perſuade himſelf that he was yet in ſafety.

Menas, to ſuppreſs this rebellion in its infancy, ſent Zara Johannes, an old officer, before him, with what forces he could collect in the inſtant; but Iſaac, informed of the bad ſtate of that army, and conſequently of his own ſuperiority, left him no time to ſtrengthen himſelf, but fell furiouſly upon him, and, with little reſiſtance, diſperſed his army. This loſs did not diſcourage the king; he had aſſembled a very conſiderable force, and, deſirous ſtill to encreaſe it, he was advancing ſlowly that he might collect the ſcattered remains of the army

that

that had been defeated. The Baharnagaſh, though victorious, ſaw with ſome concern that he could not avoid the king, whoſe courage and capacity, both as a ſoldier and a general, left him every thing to fear for his ſucceſs.

Ever ſince the maſſacre of the princes upon mount Geſhen by vizir Mudgid, in the reign of David III. none of the remains of the royal family had been confined as heretofore. Taſcar, Menas's nephew, was then at liberty, and, to ſtrengthen his cauſe, was proclaimed king by the Baharnagaſh, ſoon after the defeat of Menas's army under Zara Johannes. He was a prince very mild and affable in his manners, in all reſpects very unlike his uncle then reigning.

It was on the 1ſt of July 1561, that the king attacked the Baharnagaſh in the plain of Woggora; and, having entirely routed his army, Taſcar was taken priſoner, and ordered by the king his uncle to be carried to the brink of the high rock of Lamalmon, and, having been thrown over the ſteep precipice, he was daſhed to pieces. Iſaac himſelf eſcaped very narrowly, flying to the frontier of his government in the neighbourhood of Maſuah. The Baharnagaſh comprehended diſtinctly to what a dangerous ſituation he was now reduced. No hopes of ſafety remained but in a peace with the baſha. This at firſt appeared not eaſily obtained; for, while Iſaac remained in his duty in the reign of Claudius, he had fought with the baſha, and loſt his brother in the engagement. But preſent neceſſity overcame the memory of paſt injuries.

Samur

Samur Baſha was a man of capacity and temper; he had been in poſſeſſion of Maſuah ever ſince the year 1558. He ſaw his own evident intereſt in the meaſure, and appeared full as forward as the Baharnagaſh to complete it. Iſaac ceded Dobarwa to the baſha, and put him into immediate poſſeſſion of it, and all the low country between that and Maſuah. By this acquiſition, the Turks, before maſters of the ſea-coaſt, became poſſeſſed of the whole of the flat country correſponding thereto, as far as the mountains. Dobarwa is a large trading town, ſituated in a country abounding with proviſions of all kinds which Maſuah wanted, and it was the key of the province of Tigre and the high land of Abyſſinia.

Menas, at his acceſſion, had received kindly the compliments of congratulation made by the Portugueſe patriarch, Oviedo. But hearing that he ſtill continued to preach, and that the effect of this was frequent diviſions and animoſities among the people, he called him into his preſence, and ſtrictly commanded him to deſiſt, which the patriarch poſitively refuſing, the king loſt all patience, and fell violently upon him, beating him without mercy, tearing his clothes and beard, and taking his chalice from him, that he might prevent him from ſaying maſs. He then baniſhed him to a deſert mountain, together with Francis Lopez, where for ſeven months he endured all manner of hardſhips.

The king, in the mean time, publiſhed many rigorous proclamations againſt the Portugueſe. He would not permit them to marry with Abyſſinians,

ans. Thoſe that were already married he forbade to go to the Catholic churches with their huſbands; and, having again called the patriarch into his preſence, he ordered him forthwith to leave his kingdom upon pain of death. But Oviedo, who ſeems to have had an ambition to be the proto-martyr, refuſed abſolutely to obey theſe commands. He declared that the orders of God were thoſe he obeyed, not the ſinful ordinances of man; and, letting ſlip his cloak from his ſhoulders, he offered his bare neck to the king to ſtrike. This anſwer and geſture ſo incenſed Menas, that, drawing his ſword, he would have very ſoon put the patriarch in poſſeſſion of the martyrdom he coveted, had it not been for the interpoſition of the queen and officers that ſtood round him.

Oviedo, after having been again ſoundly beaten, was baniſhed a ſecond time to the mountain; and in this ſentence were included all the reſt of the Portugueſe prieſts, as well as others. But the biſhop would not ſubmit to this puniſhment, but with the Portugueſe, his countrymen, joined the Baharnagaſh, who had already completed his treaty with Samur Baſha.

Iſaac, before the Portugueſe prieſts, had ſhewn a deſire of becoming Catholic, and of protecting, or even embracing, their religion; and they, on their part, had aſſured him of a powerful and ſpeedy ſuccour from India, which was juſt what he wanted; and with this view he had placed himſelf to the greateſt advantage, avoiding a battle, and awaiting thoſe auxiliaries, of the arrival of which the king was very apprehenſive. But

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the ſeaſon of ſhips coming from India had paſſed without any appearance of Portugueſe, and the king was reſolved to try his fortune without expecting what another ſeaſon might produce. On the other hand, Iſaac, ſtrengthened by his league with the baſha, thought himſelf in a condition to take the field, rather than to leſſen his reputation by conſtantly declining battle.

In theſe diſpoſitions both armies met, and the confederates were again beaten by the king, with very little loſs or reſiſtance. This battle was fought on the 20th of April 1562. Immediately after this victory the king marched to Shoa, and ſent ſeveral detachments of his army before him to ſurpriſe the robbers called Dobas, and drive off their cattle. What he intended by retiring ſo far from his enemies, the Baharnagaſh and Baſha, is what we do not know. Both of them were yet alive, but probably ſo weakened by their laſt defeat as to leave no apprehenſions of being able to moleſt the country by any incurſions.

The king, being advanced into the province of Ogge, was taken ill of the Kolla, or low-country fever, and, after a few days illneſs, he died there on the 13th of January 1563, leaving three ſons, Sertza Denghel, who ſucceeded him, Taſcar, and Leſano Chriſtos.

Some European hiſtorians * have advanced that Menas was defeated and ſlain in this laſt engagement juſt now mentioned. This, however, is expreſsly contradicted in the annals of theſe times, which mention

* Ludolf, lib. 2. cap. 6.

mention the death of the king in the terms I have here related; nor were either of the chiefs of the rebels, the Baſha or Baharnagaſh, ſlain that day. The rebellion ſtill continued, Iſaac having proclaimed a prince of the name of John to be king in place of Taſcar, his deceaſed brother.

Menas was a prince of a very moroſe and violent diſpoſition, but very well adapted to the time in which he lived; brave in his perſon, active and attentive to the affairs of government. He was ſober, and an enemy to all ſorts of pleaſure; frugal, and, in his dreſs or ſtile of living, little different from any ſoldier in his army.

Theſe qualities made him feared by the great, without being beloved by the common ſoldiers accuſtomed to the liberality and magnificence of Claudius; and this want of popularity gave the Romiſh prieſts an opportunity to blacken his character beyond what in truth he deſerved. Thus, they ſay, that he had changed his religion during his impriſonment, and turned Mahometan, and that it was from the Moors he learned that ferocity of manners. But to this the anſwer is eaſy, That the manners of his own countrymen, that is of mountaineers without any profeſſion but war and blood, in which they had been exerciſed for centuries, were, probably of themſelves, much more fierce and barbarous than any he could learn among the people of Adel, occupied from time immemorial in commerce and the purſuit of riches, and neceſſarily engaged in an honeſt intercourſe, and practice of hoſpitality, with all the various nations that traded with them. Beſides, were this otherwiſe,

otherwiſe, he never had any ſociety with theſe Moors. Baniſhment to the top of a mountain * would have been his fate in Abyſſinia, had he lived a few years earlier or later than he did. Yet the mountain upon which the royal family was confined had not yet produced one of ſuch ſavage manners; and it is not probable that he was more ſtrictly guarded in Adel than he would have been in his own country.

As to his religion, we can only ſay that he abhorred the Romiſh faith, from the behaviour of thoſe that profeſſed it; and, that he had abundant reaſon ſo to do, we need only appeal to their conduct in the preceding reign, according to the accounts given by the Catholics themſelves. Let any man conſider a king ſuch as Claudius was; ſeated on his throne in the midſt of his courtiers and captains; curſed and excommunicated; called heretic and liar to his face by an ignorant peaſant and ſtranger, ſuch as John Bermudes; attacked in the night, and forced to fly for his life by a body of ſtrangers who depended upon him for their daily bread: Next conſider Menas, at his firſt acceſſion deſiring their patriarch to deſiſt from preaching a religion that was fatal to the quiet of his kingdom by ſowing diſſenſions among it as it had done in the two preceding reigns; and then figure a fanatic prieſt, declaring that he would neither depart nor obey theſe orders; then ſay what would have been done to ſtrangers in France, Spain, or Portugal, that had behaved in this manner to the ſovereign or

* To Geſhen or Wechne.

or miniſters of theſe countries. Add to this, that all the Portugueſe to a man appeared in the army of a rebel ſubject in the laſt battle, ſupporting the cauſe of a pretender to his crown. If, upon a fair review of all this, it is any matter of ſurpriſe that he ſhould be averſe to ſuch people and behaviour, I am no judge of the fair feelings of man, and the duty a prince owes to himſelf or poſterity, his country or dignity.

As to his inclination to the Mahometan religion, the fact is, that he oppoſed it even with his ſword during his whole reign, and never ſwerved from his attachment to the church of Alexandria, or his friendſhip and reſpect to the Abuna Youſef, to the end of his life, as far as we can learn from hiſtory. And leaſt, of all people in the world, does it become the Roman Catholics to accuſe him of being Mahometan, becauſe a letter is ſtill extant to Menas from pope Paul III. *, wherein the pope ſtiles him beloved *ſon in Chriſt*, and the *moſt holy of prieſts*.

* See Le Grande's Hiſtory of Abyſſinia.

SERTZA

## SERTZA DENGHEL, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1563 to 1595.

*King crowned at Axum—Abyſſinia invaded by the Galla—Account of that People—The king defeats the Army of Adel—Beats the Falaſha, and kills their King—Battle of the Mareb—Baſha ſlain, and Turks expelled from Dobarwa—King is poiſoned—Names Za Denghel his Succeſſor.*

MENAS was ſucceeded by his ſon, Sertza Denghel, who took the name of Melec Segued. He was only twelve years old when he came to the throne, and was crowned at Axum with all the ancient ceremonies. The beginning of his reign was marked by a mutiny of his ſoldiers, who, joining themſelves to ſome Mahometans, plundered the town, and then diſbanded. A miſunderſtanding alſo happened with Ayto Hamelmal, ſon to Romana Werk, daughter of Hatzé Naod, which threatened many misfortunes in its conſequences.

Tecla Asfadin, governor of Tigre, was ordered by the king to march againſt him; and the armies fought with equal advantage. But Hamelmal dying ſoon after, his party diſperſed without further trouble. Fatil, too, his couſin, who had been appointed governor of Damot, rebelled ſoon after, and was defeated by the king, who this year, (the fourth of his reign) commanded his army for the firſt time in perſon, and greatly contributed to the victory, though he was but then ſixteen years of age.

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The ſixth year of his reign he marched againſt a clan of Galla, called Azé, whom he often beat, ſtaying in the country two whole years. Upon his return, he found the Baharnagaſh, Iſaac and Harla, and other malcontents, when a ſort of a pacification followed; and having received from the rebels conſiderable preſents, he ſat down at Dobit, a ſmall town in Dembea, where he paſſed the winter.

All this time Oviedo and the Portugueſe did not appear at court. The king, however, did not moleſt the prieſts in their baptiſms, preachings, or any of their functions. He often ſpake favourably of their moral characters, their ſobriety, patience, and decency of their lives; but he condemned deciſively the whole of their religious tenets, which he pronounced to be full of danger and contradiction, and deſtructive of civil order and monarchical government. At this period the Galla again made an irruption into Gojam.

It is now time we ſhould ſpeak of this nation, which has contributed more to weakening and reducing the Abyſſinian empire, than all their civil wars, and all the foreign enemies put together. When I ſpoke of the languages of the ſeveral nations in Abyſſinia, I took occaſion merely to mention the origin of theſe Galla, and their progreſs northward, till their firſt hoſtile appearance in Abyſſinia. I ſhall now proceed to lay before the reader what further I have collected concerning them. Many of them were in the king's ſervice while I was in Abyſſinia; and, from a multitude of converſations I had with all kinds of them, I

flatter

flatter myſelf I have gathered the beſt accounts regarding theſe tribes.

The Galla are a very numerous nation of Shepherds, who probably lived under or beyond the Line. What the cauſe of their emigration was we do not pretend to ſay with certainty, but they have, for many years, been in an uniform progreſs northward. They were at firſt all infantry, and ſaid the country they came from would not permit horſes to breed in it, as is the caſe in 13° north of the Line round Sennaar. Upon coming northward, and conquering the Abyſſinian provinces, and the ſmall Mahometan diſtricts bordering on them, they have acquired a breed of horſes, which they have multiplied ſo induſtriouſly that they are become a nation of cavalry, and now hold their infantry in very little eſteem.

As under the Line, to the ſouth of Abyſſinia, the land is exceedingly high, and the ſun ſeldom makes its appearance on account of the continual rains, the Galla are conſequently of a brown complexion, with long black hair. Some, indeed, who live in the valleys of the low country, are perfectly black. Although the principal food of this people at firſt was milk and butter, yet, when they advanced into drier climates, they learned of the Abyſſinians to plow and ſow the fields, and to make bread. They ſeem to affect the number ſeven, and have divided their immenſe multitude threefold by that number. They all agree, that, when the nation advanced to the Abyſſinian frontiers, they were then in the centre of the continent. The ground beginning to riſe before them, ſeven

of their tribes or nations filed off to the eaſt towards the Indian Ocean; and, after making ſettlements there, and multiplying exceedingly, they marched forward due ſouth into Bali and Dawaro, which they firſt waſted by conſtant incurſions, then conquered and ſettled there in the reign of David III. in 1537.

Another diviſion of ſeven tribes went off to the weſt about the ſame time, and ſpread themſelves in another ſemicircle round the ſouth ſide of the Nile, and all along its banks round Gojam, and to the eaſt behind the country of the Agows, (which are on the eaſt ſide of the Nile) to that of the Gongas and Gafats. The high woody banks of this river have hitherto been their barrier to the ſouthward; not but that they have often fought for, and often conquered, and ſtill oftener plundered, the countries on the Abyſſinian ſide of that river; and, from this reign downwards, the ſcene of action with the Abyſſinians has conſtantly been on the eaſt ſide of the river. All I mean is, they have never made a ſettlement on the Abyſſinian ſide of the Nile, except ſuch tribes of them as, from wars among themſelves, have gone over to the king of Abyſſinia and obtained lands on the banks of that river, oppoſite to the nation they have revolted from, againſt which they have ever after been the ſecureſt bulwark.

A third diviſion of ſeven tribes remained in the center, due ſouth of the low country of Shoa; and theſe are the leaſt known, as having made the feweſt incurſions. They have indeed, poſſeſſed Walaka, a ſmall province between Amhara and Shoa;

Shoa; but this had been permitted politically by the governor of Shoa, as a barrier between him and Abyſſinia, on whoſe ſovereign he ſcarcely acknowledges any dependence but for form's ſake, his province being at preſent an hereditary government deſcending from father to ſon.

All theſe tribes of Galla gird Abyſſinia round at all points from eaſt to weſt, making inroads, and burning and murdering all that fall into their hands. The privities of the men they cut off, dry, and hang them up in their houſes. They are ſo mercileſs as to ſpare not even women with child, whom they rip up in hopes of deſtroying a male. The weſtern part of theſe Galla, which ſurrounds the peninſula of Gojam and Damot, are called the Boren Galla; and thoſe that are to the eaſt are named Bertuma Galla, though this laſt word is ſeldom uſed in hiſtory, where the Galla to the weſtward are called Boren; and the others Galla merely, without any other addition. All theſe tribes, though the moſt cruel that ever appeared in any country, are yet governed by the ſtricteſt diſcipline at home, where the ſmalleſt broil or quarrel among individuals is taken cognizance of, and receives immediate puniſhment.

Each of the three diviſions of Galla elect a king, that is, there is a king for every ſeven tribes. There is alſo a kind of nobility among them, from whoſe families alone the ſovereign can be choſen. But there are certain degrees of merit (all warlike) that raiſe, from time to time, their plebeian families to nobility, and the right of ſuffrage. No one of theſe nobles can be elected till paſt forty years of

age, unleſs he has ſlain with his own hand a number of men which, added to his years, makes up forty.

The council of each of the ſeven tribes firſt meets ſeparately in its own diſtrict: Here it determines how many are neceſſary to be left behind for the governing, guarding, and cultivating the territory, while thoſe fixed upon by moſt votes go as delegates to meet the repreſentatives of the other nations at the domicil, or head-quarters of the king, among the tribe from which the ſovereign of the laſt ſeven years was taken. Here they ſit down under a tree which ſeems to be ſacred, and the god of all the nations. It is called Wanzey *; has a white flower, and great quantity of foliage, and is very common in Abyſſinia. After a variety of votes, the number of candidates is reduced to four, and the ſuffrage of ſix of theſe nations go then no farther; but the ſeventh, whoſe turn it is to have a king out of their tribe, chooſe, from among the four, one, whom they crown with a garland of Wanzey, and put a ſceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood in his hands, which they call Buco.

The king of the weſtern Galla is ſtiled Lubo, the other Mooty. At this aſſembly, the king allots to each their ſcene of murder and rapine; but limits them always to ſpeedy returns in caſe the body of the nation ſhould have occaſion for them. The Galla are reputed very good ſoldiers for ſurpriſe, and in the firſt attack, but have not conſtancy or perſeverance. They accompliſh incredible marches;

* See the article Wanzey in the Appendix.

marches; ſwim rivers holding by the horſes tail, (an exerciſe to which both they and their horſes are perfectly trained;) do the utmoſt miſchief poſſible in the ſhorteſt time; and rarely return by the ſame way they came. They are excellent light horſe for a regular army in an enemy's country.

Iron is very ſcarce among them, ſo that their principal arms are poles ſharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire, which they uſe like lances. Their ſhields are made of bulls hides of a ſingle fold, ſo that they are very ſubject to warp in heat, or become too pliable and ſoft in wet weather. Notwithſtanding theſe diſadvantages, the report of their cruelty made ſuch an impreſſion upon the Abyſſinians, that, on their firſt engagements they rarely ſtood firmly the Galla's firſt onſet. Beſides this, the ſhrill and very barbarous noiſe they are always uſed to make at the moment they charge, uſed to terrify the horſes and riders, ſo that a flight generally followed the attack made by Galla horſe.

Theſe melancholy and frantic howls I had occaſion to hear often in thoſe engagements that happened while I was in Abyſſinia. The Edjow, a body of Galla who had been in the late king Joas's ſervice, and were relations to him by his mother, who was of that clan of ſouthern Galla, were conſtantly in the rebel army, and always in the moſt diſaffected part, who, with the troops of Begemder and Laſta, attacked the king's houſehold, where he was in perſon; and, though they behaved with a bravery even to raſhneſs, moſt of them loſt their lives, upon the long pikes of the king's black horſe, without ever doing any notable execution, as theſe

horſes

horſes were too well trained to be at all moved with their ſhrieks, when they charged, though their bravery and fidelity merited a better fate.

The women are ſaid to be very fruitful. They do not confine themſelves even a day after labour, but waſh and return to their work immediately. They plow, ſow, and reap. The cattle tread out the corn, but the men are the herdſmen, and take charge of the cattle in the fields.

Both ſexes are ſomethiug leſs than the middle ſize, exceedingly light and agile. Both, but eſpecially the men, plait their hair with the bowels and guts of oxen, which they wear likewiſe, like belts, twiſted round their middle; and theſe, as they putrify, occaſion a terrible ſtench. Both copiouſly anoint their heads and bodies with butter, or melted greaſe, which is continually raining from them, and which indicates that they came from a country hotter than that which they poſſeſs. They greatly reſemble the Hottentots in this filthy taſte of dreſs. The reſt of their body is naked; a piece of ſkin only covers them before; and they wear a goat's ſkin on their ſhoulders, in ſhape of a woman's handkerchief, or tippet.

It has been ſaid *, that no religion was ever diſcovered among them. I imagine that the facts upon which this opinion is founded have never been ſufficiently inveſtigated. The Wanzey-tree, under which their kings are crowned, is avowedly worſhipped for a god in every tribe. They have certain ſtones alſo, for an object of their devotion, which

* Jerome Lobo Hiſt. of Abyſſinia ap. Le Grande.

which I never could ſufficiently underſtand to give further deſcription of them. But they certainly pay adoration to the moon, eſpecially the new moon, for of this I have frequently been a witneſs. They likewiſe worſhip certain ſtars in particular poſitions, and at different times of the year, and are, in my opinion, ſtill in the ancient religion of Sabaiſm. All of them believe that, after death, they are to live again; that they are to riſe with their body, as they were on earth, to enter into another life they know not where, but they are to be in a ſtate of body infinitely more perfect than the preſent, and are to die no more, nor ſuffer grief, ſickneſs, or trouble of any kind. They have very obſcure, or no ideas at all of future puniſhment; but their reward is to be a moderate ſtate of enjoyment with the ſame family and perſons with which they lived on earth. And this is very nearly the ſame belief with the other Pagan nations in Africa with which I have converſed intimately; and this is what writers generally call a belief of the immortality of the ſoul. Nor did I ever know one ſavage that had a more diſtinct idea of it, or ever ſeparated it from the immortality of the body.

The Galla to the ſouth are moſtly Mahometans; on the eaſt and weſt chiefly Pagans. They intermarry with each other, but ſuffer no ſtrangers to live among them. The Moors, however, by courage, patience, and attention, have found out the means of trading with them in a tolerable degree of ſafety. The goods they carry are courſe Surat blue cloaths called *maroxty*; alſo myrrh and ſalt. This laſt is the principal and moſt valuable article.

The

The Galla ſometimes marry the Abyſſinian women, but the iſſue of thoſe marriages are incapable of all employment. Their form of marriage is the following: The bride-groom, ſtanding before the parents of the bride, holds graſs in his right hand and the dung of a cow in his left. He then ſays, "May this never enter, nor this ever come out, "if he does not do what he promiſes;" that is, may the graſs never enter the cow's mouth to feed it, or may ſhe die before it is diſcharged. Matrimonial vows, moreover, are very ſimple; he ſwears to his bride that he ſhall give her meat and drink while living, and bury her when dead.

Polygamy is allowed among them, but the men are commonly content with one wife. Such, indeed, is their moderation in this reſpect, that it is the women that ſolicit the men to increaſe the number of their wives. The love of their children ſeems to get a ſpeedy aſcendency over paſſion and pleaſure, and is a noble part of the character of theſe ſavages that ought not to be forgot. A young woman, having a child or two by her huſband, intreats and ſolicits him that he would take another wife, when ſhe names to him all the beautiful girls of her acquaintance, eſpecially thoſe that ſhe thinks likelieſt to have large families. After the huſband has made his choice, ſhe goes to the tent of the young woman, and ſits behind it in a ſupplicant poſture, till ſhe has excited the attention of the family within. She then, with an audible voice, declares who ſhe is; that ſhe is daughter of ſuch a one; that her huſband has all the qualifications for making a woman happy; that ſhe has only two children

children by him; and, as her family is ſo ſmall, ſhe comes to ſolicit their daughter for her huſband's wife, that their families may be joined together, and be ſtrong; and that her children, from their being few in number, may not fall a prey to their enemies in the day of battle; for the Galla always fight in families, whether againſt one another, or againſt other enemies.

When ſhe has thus obtained a wife for her huſband, ſhe carries her home, puts her to bed with her huſband, where, having left her, ſhe feaſts with the bride's relations. There the children of the firſt marriage are produced, and the men of the bride's family put each their hands upon theſe children's heads, and afterwards take the oath in the uſual manner, to live and die with them as their own offspring. The children, then, after this ſpecies of adoption, go to their relations, and viſit them for the ſpace of ſeven days. All that time the huſband remains at home in poſſeſſion of his new bride; at the end of which he gives a feaſt, when the firſt wife is ſeated by her huſband, and the young one ſerves the whole company. The firſt wife from this day keeps her precedence; and the ſecond is treated by the firſt wife like a grown up-daughter. I believe it would be very long before the love of their families would introduce this cuſtom among the young women of Britain.

When a father dies and leaves many children, the eldeſt ſucceeds to the whole inheritance without diviſion; nor is he obliged, at any time, or by any circumſtance, to give his brothers a part afterwards. If the father is alive when the ſon firſt begins

gins to ſhave his head, which is a declaration of manhood, he gives two or three milk-cows, or more, according to his rank and fortune. Theſe, and all their produce, remain the property of the child to whom they were given by his father; and theſe the brother is obliged to pay to him upon his father's death, in the ſame number and kinds. The eldeſt brother, is moreover, obliged to give the ſiſter, whenever ſhe is marriageable, whatever other proviſion the father may have made in his lifetime for her, with all its increaſe from the day of the donation.

When the father becomes old and unfit for war, he is obliged to ſurrender his whole effects to his eldeſt ſon, who is bound to give him aliment, and nothing elſe; and, when the eldeſt brother dies, leaving younger brothers behind him, and a widow young enough to bear children, the youngeſt brother of all is obliged to marry her; but the children of the marriage are always accounted as if they were the eldeſt brother's; nor does this marriage of the youngeſt brother to the widow entitle him to any part of the deceaſed's fortune.

The ſouthern Galla are called Elma Kilelloo, Elma Gooderoo, Elma Robali, Elma Doolo, Elma Bodena, Elma Horreta, and Elma Michaeli; theſe are the ſeven ſouthern nations which the Mahometan traders paſs through in their way to Narea, the ſouthernmoſt country the Abyſſinians ever conquered.

The Weſtern Galla for their principal clans have the Djawi, Edjow or Ayzo, and Toluma, and theſe were clans we principally fought with when I was

in

in Abyſſinia. They are chiefly Pagans. Some of their children, who were left young in court, when their fathers fled, after the murder of the late king their maſter, were better Chriſtians and better ſoldiers than any Abyſſinians we had.

It is not a matter of ſmall curioſity to know what is their food, that is ſo eaſy of carriage as to enable them to traverſe immenſe deſerts, that they may, without warning, fall upon the towns and villages in the cultivated country of Abyſſinia. This is nothing but coffee roaſted, till it can be pulveriſed, and then mixed with butter to a conſiſtency that will ſuffer it to be rolled up in balls, and put in a leather bag. A ball of this compoſition, between the circumference of a ſhilling and half-a-crown, about the ſize of a billiard-ball, keeps them, they ſay, in ſtrength and ſpirits during a whole day's fatigue, better than a loaf of bread, or a meal of meat. Its name in Arabia and Abyſſinia, is Bun, but I apprehend its true name is Caffé, from Caffa, the ſouth province of Narea, whence it is firſt ſaid to have come; it is white in the bean. The coffee-trade is the wood of the country, produced ſpontaneouſly everywhere in great abundance, from Caffa to the banks of the Nile.

Thus much for this remarkable nation, whoſe language is perfectly different from any in Abyſſinia, and is the ſame throughout all the tribes, with very little variation of dialect. This is a nation that has conquered ſome of the fineſt provinces of Abyſſinia, and of whoſe inroads we ſhall hereafter have occaſion to ſpeak continually; and it is very difficult to ſay how far they might not have accom-

pliſhed

pliſhed the conqueſt of the whole, had not providence interpoſed in a manner little expected, but more efficacious than a thouſand armies, and all the inventions of man.

The Galla, before their inroads into Abyſſinia, had never in their own country ſeen or heard of the ſmall-pox. This diſeaſe met them in the Abyſſinian villages. It raged among them with ſuch violence, that whole provinces conquered by them became half-deſert; and, in many places, they were forced to become tributary to thoſe whom before they kept in continual fear. But this did not happen till the reign of Yaſous the Great, at the beginning of the preſent century, where we ſhall take freſh notice of it, and now proceed with what remains of the reign of Sertza Denghel, whom we left with his army in the 9th year of his reign, reſiding at Dobit, a ſmall town in Dembea, watching the motion of the rebels, Iſaac Baharnagaſh, and others, his confederates.

The tenth year of his reign, as ſoon as the weather permitted him, the king went into Gojam, to oppoſe the inroads of the Djawi, a clan of the weſtern or Boren Galla, who then were in poſſeſſion of the Buco, or royal dignity, among the ſeven nations. But they had repaſſed the Nile upon the firſt news of the king's march, without having time to waſte the country. The king then went to winter in Bizamo, which is ſouth of the Nile, the native country of theſe Galla, the Djawi.

If this nation, the Galla, has deſerved ill of the Abyſſinians by the frequent inroads made into their country, they muſt, however, confeſs one obligation,

tion, that in the end they entirely ruined their ancient enemy, the Mahometan king of Adel, and reduced him to a ſtate of perfect inſignificance.

Sertza Denghel then returned with his army into Dembea, where, finding the militia of that province much diſaffected by communication with the Mooriſh ſoldiers ſettled among them from Gragnè's time to this day, and that moſt of them had in their hearts forſaken the Chriſtian religion, and were all ready to fail in their allegiance, he aſſembled the greateſt part of them without their arms, and, ſurrounding them with his ſoldiers, cut them to pieces, to the number of 3000 men.

In the 13th year of his reign, Mahomet king of Adel marched out of his own country with the view of joining the Baſha and Baharnagaſh. But the king, ever watchful over the motions of his enemies, ſurpriſed the Baharnagaſh before his junction either with Mahomet or the Baſha, and defeated or diſperſed his army, obliging him to fly in diſguiſe, with the utmoſt danger of being taken priſoner, to hide himſelf with the baſha at Dobarwa. He then appointed Darguta, governor of Tigre, an old and experienced officer, giving him the charge of the province, and to watch the baſha; and, leaving with him his wounded, (and in their place taking ſome freſh ſoldiers from Darguta, he, by forced marches, endeavoured to meet Mahomet, who had not heard of his victory over Iſaac; and being informed that the king of Adel was encamped on the hither ſide of the river Wali, having paſſed it to join Iſaac, the king, by a ſudden movement, croſſed the river, and came oppoſite to Mahomet's quarters,

ters, who was then ſtriking his tents, having juſt heard of the fate of the Baharnagaſh. Mahomet and his whole army were ſtruck with a panic at this unexpected appearance of the king on the oppoſite ſide of the river, which had cut off his retreat to Adel. Fearing, however, there might ſtill be an enemy behind him, and that he ſhould be hemmed in between both, he reſolved to paſs, but did it in ſo tumultuous a manner that the king's army had no trouble but to ſlaughter thoſe who had arrived at the oppoſite bank. Great part of the cavalry, ſeeing the fate of their companions at the ford, attempted to paſs above and below by ſwimming: but, though the river was deep and ſmooth, the banks were high, and many were drowned, not being able to ſcramble up on the other ſide. Many were alſo deſtroyed by ſtones, and the lances of Sertza Denghel's men, from the banks above; ſome paſſed, however, joining Mahomet, and leaving the reſt of the army to attempt a paſſage at the ford, croſſed with the utmoſt ſpeed lower down the river without being purſued, and carried the news of their own defeat to Adel.

The whole Mooriſh army periſhed this day except the horſe, either by the ſword or in the river; nor had the Moors received ſo ſevere a blow ſince the defeat of Gragne by Claudius. The king then decamped, and took poſt at Zarroder, on the frontiers of Adel, with a deſign to winter there and lay waſte the country, into which he intended to march as ſoon as the fair weather returned. But it was the misfortune of this great prince, that his enemies were ſituated at two moſt diſtant extremities

of

of the kingdom. For the Galla attacked Gojam on the weſt, at the very time he prepared to enter Adel on the eaſt. Without loſs of time, however, he traverſed the whole kingdom of Abyſſinia, and came up with the Boren Galla upon the river Madge, but no action of conſequence followed. The Galla, attempting the king's camp in the night, and finding themſelves too weak to carry it, retreated immediately into their own country. While returning to Dembea, he met a party of the Falaſha, called Abati, at Wainadega, and entirely deſtroyed them, ſo that not one eſcaped.

The king was now ſo formidable that no army of the enemy dared to face him, and he obliged the Falaſha to give up their king Radaet, whom he baniſhed to Wadge; and the four following years he ſpent in ravaging the country of his enemies the Galla, in Shat and Bed, and that of the Falaſha in Samen and Serke, where he beat Caliph king of the Falaſha, who had ſucceeded Radaet.

The Galla, in advancing towards Gojam and Damot, had over-run the whole low country between the mountains of Narea and the Nile. The king, deſirous to open a communication with a country where there was a great trade, eſpecially for gold, croſſed the Nile in his way to that province, the Galla flying everywhere before him. He was received with very great joy by the prince of that country, who looked upon him as his deliverer from thoſe cruel enemies. Here he received many rich preſents; more particularly a large quantity of gold, and he wintered at Cutheny in that province where Abba Hedar his brother died, having been blown up with gun-powder, with his wife and children.

dren. The Nareans desired, this year, to be admitted to the Christian faith; and they were converted and baptised by a mission of priests sent by the king for that purpose.

At the time he was rescuing the kingdom of Narea, Cadward Basha, a young officer of merit and reputation, lately come from Constantinople to Dawaro as basha of Masuah, had begun his command with making inroads into Tigré, and driving off a number of the inhabitants into slavery. The king, necessarily engaged at a distance, suffered these injuries with a degree of impatience; and, after having provided for the security of the several countries immediately near him, he marched with his army directly for Woggora, committing every degree of excess in his march, in order to provoke the Falasha to descend from their heights and offer him battle.

A frugal œconomical people, such as the Jews are, could not bear to see their cattle and crops destroyed in so wanton a manner before their very faces. They came, therefore, down in immense numbers to attack the king, one of the most excellent generals Abyssinia ever had, at the head of a small, but veteran army. Geshen, brother of the famous Gideon, was then king of the Jews, and commanded the army of his countrymen. The battle was fought on the plain of Woggora on the 19th of January 1594, with the success that was to be expected. Four thousand of the Jewish army were slain upon the spot; and, among them, Geshen, their unfortunate king and leader.

After

After this victory, Sertza Denghel marched his army into Kuara, through the country where the Jews had many ſtrong-holds, and received every-where their ſubmiſſion. Then turning to the left, he came through the country of the Shangalla, called Woombarea, and ſo to that of the Agows. There he heard that new troubles were meditating in Damot; but the inhabitants of that province were not yet ripe enough to break out into open rebellion.

That he might not, therefore, have two enemies at ſuch a diſtance from each other upon his hands at once, this year, as ſoon as the rains were over, he determined to march and attack the baſha. The baſha was very ſoon informed of his deſigns, and as ſoon prepared to meet them; ſo that the king found him already in the field, encamped on his own ſide of the Mareb, but without having committed, till then, any act of hoſtility. He marched out of his camp, and formed, upon ſeeing the royal army approach; leaving a ſufficient field for the king to draw up in, if he ſhould incline to croſs the river, and attack him.

This confident, rather than prudent conduct of the baſha, did not intimidate the king, who being uſed to improve every advantage coolly, and without bravado, embraced this very opportunity his enemy choſe to give him. He formed, therefore, on his own ſide of the Mareb, and paſſed it in as good order as poſſible, conſidering it is a ſwift ſtream, and very deep at that ſeaſon of the year. He halted ſeveral times while his men were in the water, to put them again in order, as if he had ex-

pected to be attacked the moment he landed on the other ſide. The baſha, a man of knowledge in his profeſſion, who ſaw this cautious conduct of the king, is ſaid to have cried out, "How unlike he is "to what I have heard of his father!" alluding to the general raſh behaviour of the late king Menas whilſt at the head of his army.

Serta Denghel having left all his baggage on the other ſide, and paſſed the river, drew up his army in the ſame deliberate manner in which he had croſſed the Mareb, and formed oppoſite to the baſha; as if he had been acting under him, and by his orders, availing himſelf with great attention of all the advantages the ground could afford him. The baſha, confident in the ſuperior valour of his troops, thought, now he had got the king between him and the river, that he would eaſily that day finiſh Sertza Denghel's life and reign.

The battle began with the moſt determined reſolution and vigour on both ſides. The Abyſſinian foot drove back the Turkiſh infantry; and the king, diſmounting from his horſe, with his lance and ſhield in his hand, and charging at their head, animated them to preſerve that advantage. On the other hand, the baſha, who had ſoon put to flight part of the Abyſſinian horſe with whom he had engaged, fell furiouſly upon the foot commanded by the king, the Turks making a great carnage among them with their ſabres, and the affair became but doubtful, when Robel, gentleman of the bedchamber to the king, who commanded the pikemen on horſeback, part of the king's houſehold troops, ſeeing his maſter's danger, charged the Turkiſh

Turkiſh horſe where he ſaw the baſha in perſon, and, clearing his way, broke his pike upon an officer of the baſha who carried the ſtandard immediately before him, and threw him dead at his feet. Being without other arms, he then drew the ſhort crooked knife which the Abyſſinians always carry in their girdle, and, puſhing up his horſe cloſe before the baſha could recover from his ſurpriſe, he plunged it in his throat, ſo that he expired inſtantly. So unlooked-for a ſpectacle ſtruck a panic into the troops. The Turkiſh horſe firſt turned their backs, and a general rout followed.

The baſha's body was carried upon a mule out of the field, and ſtruck a terror into all the Mahometans wherever it paſſed. It no ſooner entered Dobarwa than it was obliged to be carried out at the other end of the town. Sertza Denghel was not one that ſlumbered upon a victory. He entered Dobarwa ſword in hand, putting all the Pagans and Mahometans that fell in his way to death, and, in this manner, purſued them to the frontiers of Maſuah, leaving many to die for want of water in that deſert.

The king, in honour of this brave action performed by Robel, ordered what follows to be writ in letters of gold, and inſerted in the records of the kingdom: "Robel, ſervant to Sertza Denghel, "and ſon to Menetcheli, ſlew a Turkiſh baſha on "horſeback with a common knife."

Sertza Denghel, having thus delivered himſelf from the moſt formidable of his enemies, marched through Gojam again into Narea, extirpating, all the way he went, the Galla that obſtructed his way

to that ſtate. He left an additional number of prieſts and monks to inſtruct them in the Chriſtian religion; though there are ſome hiſtorians of this reign who pretend that it was not till this ſecond viſit that Narea was converted.

However this may be, victory had every where attended his ſteps, and he was now preparing to chaſtiſe the malcontents at Damot, when he was accoſted by a prieſt, famous for his holineſs and talent for divination, who warned him not to undertake that war. But the king, expreſſing his contempt of both the meſſage and meſſenger, declared his fixed reſolution to invade Damot without delay. The prieſt is ſaid to have limited his advice ſtill further, and to have only begged him to remember not to eat the fiſh of a certain river in the territory of Giba in the province of Shat. The king, however, flushed with his victory over the Boren Galla, forgot the name of the river and the injunction; and, having eat fiſh out of this river, was immediately after taken dangerouſly ill, and died on his return.

The writer of his life ſays, that the fatal effects of this river were afterwards experienced in the reign of Yaſous the Great, at the time in which he wrote, when the king's whole army, encamped along the ſides of this river, were taken with violent ſickneſs after eating the fiſh caught in it, and that many of the ſoldiers died. Whether this be really fact or not, I will not take upon me to decide. Whether fiſh, or any other animal, living in water impregnated with poiſonous minerals, can preſerve its own life, and yet imbibe a quantity of poiſon

poiſon ſufficient to deſtroy the men that ſhould eat it, ſeems to me very doubtful. Something like this is ſaid to happen in oyſters, which are found on copperas beds, or have preparations of copperas thrown upon them to tinge a part of them with green. I do not, however, think it likely, that the creature would live after this metallic doſe, or preſerve a taſte that would make it food for a man till he accumulated a quantity ſufficient to deſtroy him.

Sertzel Denghel was of a very humane affable diſpoſition, very different from his father Menas. He was ſtedfaſt in his adherence to the church of Alexandria, and ſeemed perfectly indifferent as to the Romiſh church and clergy. In converſation, he frequently condemned their tenets, but always commended the ſobriety and ſanctity of their lives. He left no legitimate ſons, but many daughters by his wife Mariam Sena; and two natural ſons, Za Mariam and Jacob. He had alſo a nephew called *Za Denghel*, ſon of his brother Leſana Chriſtos.

It is abſolutely contrary to truth, what is ſaid by Tellez and others, that the illegitimate ſons have no right to ſucceed to the crown. There is, indeed, no ſort of difference, as may be ſeen by many examples in the courſe of this hiſtory.

Sertza Denghel at firſt ſeemed to have intended his nephew, Za Denghel, to ſucceed him, a prince who had every good quality; was arrived at an age fit for governing, and had attended him and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in great part of his wars. But, being upon his death-bed, he changed his mind, probably at the inſtigation of the queen and the ambitious

ambitious nobles, who desired to have the government in their own hands during a long minority. His son Jacob, a boy of seven years old, was now brought into court, and treated as heir-apparent, which every body thought was but natural and pardonable from the affection of a father.

At last when he found that he was sick to death, the interest and love of his country seemed to overcome even the ties of blood; so that, calling his council together around his bed, he designed his successor in this last speech: 'As I am sensible I 'am at the point of death, next to the care of 'my soul, I am anxious for the welfare of my king-'dom. My first idea was to appoint Jacob my son 'to be successor; and I had done so unless for his 'youth, and it is probable neither you nor I could 'have cause to repent it. Considering, however, 'the state of my kingdom, I prefer its interest to 'the private affection I bear my son; and do, 'therefore, hereby appoint Za Denghel my ne-'phew to succeed me, and be your king; and re-'commend him to you as fit for war, ripe in years, 'exemplary in the practice of every virtue, and as 'deserving of the crown by his good qualities, as 'he is by his near relation to the royal family.' And with these words the king expired in the end of August 1595, and was buried in the island Roma.

As soon as Sertza Denghel died, the nobility resumed their former resolutions. The very reasons the dying king had given them, why Za Denghel was fitted to reign, were those for which they were

were determined to reject him: as they, after so long a reign as the last, were perfectly weary at being kept in their duty, and desired nothing more than an infant king and a long minority: this they found in Jacob.

## ZA DENGHEL.

From 1595 to 1604.

*Za Denghel dethroned—Jacob a Minor ſucceeds—Za Denghel is reſtored—Baniſhes Jacob to Narea—Converted to the Romiſh Religion—Battle of Barthco, and Death of the King.*

SERTZA DENGHEL had ſeveral daughters, one of whom was married to Kefla Wahad, governor of the province of Tigré, and another to Athanaſius, governor of Amhara. Theſe two were the moſt powerful men then in the kingdom. The empreſs and her two ſons-in-law ſaw plainly, that the ſucceſſion of Za Denghel, a man of ripe years, poſſeſſed of every requiſite for reigning, was to exclude them from any ſhare in government but a ſubaltern one, for which they were to ſtand candidates upon their own merits, in common with the reſt of the nobility.

Accordingly, no ſooner was Sertza Denghel dead, perhaps ſome time before, but a conſpiracy was formed to change the order of ſucceſſion, and this was immediately executed by order of this triumvirate, who ſent a body of ſoldiers and ſeized Za Denghel, and carried him cloſe priſoner to Dek, a large iſland in the lake Tzana, belonging to the queen, where he was kept for ſome time, till he eſcaped and hid himſelf in the wild inacceſſible mountains of Gojam, which there form the banks of the Nile. They carried their precautions ſtill further; and

and ſubſequent events after ſhewed, that theſe were well-grounded. They ſent a party of men at the ſame time to ſurpriſe Socinios, but he, ſufficiently upon his guard, no ſooner ſaw the fate of his couſin, Za Denghel, than he withdrew himſelf, but in ſuch a manner that ſhewed plainly he knew the value of his own pretenſions, and was not to be an unconcerned ſpectator if a revolution was to happen.

In order to underſtand perfectly the claims of thoſe princes, who were by turns placed on the throne in the bloody war that followed, it will be neceſſary to know that the emperor David III. had three ſons: The eldeſt was Claudius, who ſucceeded him in the empire; the hiſtory of whoſe reign we have already given: The ſecond was Jacob, who died a minor before his brother, but left two ſons, Taſcar and Facilidas: The third ſon was Menas, called Adamas Segued, who ſucceeded Claudius his brother in the empire; whoſe reign we have likewiſe given in its proper place.

Menas had four ſons; Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, who ſucceeded his father in the empire, and whoſe hiſtory we have juſt now finiſhed; the ſecond Aquieter; the third Abatè; and the fourth, Leſana Chriſtos; whoſe ſon was that Za Denghel of whom we were laſt ſpeaking, appointed to ſucceed to the throne by his uncle Sertza Denghel, when on his death-bed.

Taſcar, the ſon of Jacob, died a minor; he rebelled againſt his uncle Menas, in confederacy with the Baharnagaſh, as we have already ſeen; and his army being beat by his uncle and ſovereign, he

was,

was, by his order, thrown over the ſteep precipice of Lamalmon, and daſhed to pieces. Facilidas, the ſecond remaining ſon of the ſame minor Jacob, lived many years, poſſeſſed great eſtates in Gojam, and died afterwards in battle, fighting againſt the Galla, in defence of theſe poſſeſſions.

This Facilidas had a natural ſon named Socinios, who inherited his father's poſſeſſions; was nephew to Sertza Denghel, and couſin-german to Za Denghel appointed to ſucceed to the throne; ſo that Za Denghel being once removed, as Jacob had been poſtponed, there could be no doubt of Socinios's claim as the neareſt heir-male to David III. commonly called Wanag Segued.

Socinios, from his infancy, had been trained to arms, and had undergone a number of hardſhips in his uncle's wars. Part of his eſtate had been ſeized, after his father's death, by men in power, favourites of Sertza Denghel; and he hoped for a complete reſtitution of them from Za Denghel, his couſin, when he ſhould ſucceed, for theſe two were as much connected with each other by friendſhip and affection, as they were by blood. Nor would any ſtep, ſays the hiſtorian, have ever been taken by Socinios towards mounting the throne, had Za Denghel his couſin ſucceeded, as by right he ought.

In the mean time, he was at the head of a conſiderable band of ſoldiers; had aſſiſted Faſa Chriſtos, governor of Gojam, in defeating the Galla, who had over-run that province; and, by his courage and conduct that day, had left a ſtrong impreſſion upon the minds of the troops that he would ſoon become

become the moſt capable and active ſoldier of his time.

The queen and her two ſons-in-law being diſappointed in their attempt upon Socinios, were obliged to take the only ſtep that remained in their choice, which was to appoint the infant Jacob * king, a child of ſeven years old, and put him under the tutelage of Ras Athanaſius.

The empreſs Mariam Sena, and her two ſons-in-law, had gained to their party Za Selaſſe, a perſon of low birth, native of an obſcure nation of Pagans, called Guraguè, a man eſteemed for bravery and conduct, and beloved by the ſoldiers; but turbulent and ſeditious, without honour, gratitude, or regard, either to his word, to his ſovereign, or the intereſts of his country.

Jacob had ſuffered patiently the direction of thoſe that governed him, ſo long as the excuſe of his minority was a good one. But being now arrived at the age of 17, he began to put in, by degrees, for his ſhare in the direction of affairs; and obſerving ſome ſteps that had tended to prolong the government of his tutors, by his own power he baniſhed Za Selaſſe, the author of them, into the diſtant kingdom of Narea.

This vigorous proceeding alarmed the empreſs and her party. They ſaw that the meaſure taken by Jacob would preſently lead all good men and lovers of their country to ſupport him, and to annihilate their power. They reſolved not to wait till

* The name of infant-king ſeems to have been given as a nick-name in Abyſſinia, and is preſerved to this day.

till this took place, but inſtantly to reſtore Za Denghel, whom, with great difficulty, they found hid in the mountains between Gojam and Damot. And, to remove every ſuſpicion in Za Denghel's breaſt, Ras Athanaſius repaired to the palace, giving Jacob publicly, even on the throne, the moſt abuſive and ſcurrilous language, calling him an obſtinate, ſtubborn, fooliſh boy; declaring him degraded from being king, and announcing to his face the coming of Za Denghel to ſupplant him. Jacob's behaviour on ſo unexpected an occaſion was not ſuch as Athanaſius's raſh ſpeech led to expect. He gave a cool and mild reply to theſe invectives; but, finding himſelf entirely in his enemy's power, without loſing a moment, he left his palace in the night, taking the road to Samen, not doubting of ſafety and protection if he could reach his mother's relations among thoſe high, rocky mountains.

Fortune at firſt ſeemed to favour his endeavours. He arrived at a ſmall village immediately in the neighbourhood of the country to which he was going; but there he was diſcovered and made priſoner; carried back and delivered to Za Denghel his rival, whom he found placed on his throne.

In all theſe caſes, it is the invariable, though barbarous practice of Abyſſinia, to mutilate any ſuch pretender to the throne, by cutting off his noſe, ear, hand, or foot, as they ſhall be inclined the patient ſhould die or live after the operation, it being an eſtabliſhed law, that no perſon can ſucceed to the throne, as to the prieſthood, without being perfect in all his limbs. Za Denghel, as he could

not

not adopt ſo inhuman a procedure even with a rival, contented himſelf with only baniſhing Jacob to Narea.

Ever ſince that period of Menas's reign, when Samur, baſha of Maſuah, had been put in poſſeſſion of Dobarwa in virtue of a treaty with Iſaac Baharnagaſh, then in rebellion, the Catholic religion was left deſtitute of all ſupport, the fathers that had remained in Abyſſinia being dead, and the entry into that kingdom ſhut up by the violent animoſity of the Turks, and the cruelties they exerciſed upon all miſſionaries that fell into their hands. The few Catholics that remained were abſolutely deprived of all aſſiſtance, when Melchior Sylvanus, an Indian vicar of the church of St. Anne at Goa, was pitched upon as a proper perſon to be ſent to their relief. His language, colour, eaſtern air and manners, ſeemed to promiſe that he would ſucceed, and baffle the vigilance of the Turks.

He arrived at Maſuah in 1597, and entered Abyſſinia unſuſpected; but the power of the Turks being much leſſened by the great defeat given them by Sertza Denghel, who ſlew Cadward Baſha, and retook Dobarwa and all its dependencies, as has been already mentioned, a very conſiderable part of their former dangers, the miſſionaries might now hope to eſcape. But there ſtill remained others obſtructing the communication with India, which, however, were ſurmountable, and gave way, as moſt of the kind do, to prudence, courage, and perſeverance.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, in the year 1600, Peter Paez, the moſt capable, as well as moſt ſucceſsful miſſionary that ever entered Ethiopia, arrived at Maſuah, after having ſuffered a long impriſonment, and many other hardſhips, on his way to that iſland; and, taking upon him the charge of the Portugueſe, relieved Melchior Sylvanus, who returned to India.

Paez, however, did not preſs on to court as his predeceſſors, and even his ſucceſſors conſtantly did, but, confining himſelf to the convent of Fremona in Tigre, he firſt ſet himſelf by an invincible application to attain the knowledge of the Geez written language, in which he arrived to a degree of knowledge ſuperior to that of the natives themſelves. He then applied to the inſtruction of youth, keeping a ſchool, where he taught equally the children of the Portugueſe, and thoſe of the Abyſſinians. The great progreſs made by the ſcholars ſpeedily ſpread abroad the reputation of the maſter. Firſt of all, John Gabriel, one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed officers of the Portugueſe, ſpoke of him in the warmeſt terms of commendation to Jacob, then upon the throne, who ſent to Paez, and ordered his attendance as ſoon as the rainy ſeaſon ſhould be over.

In the month of April 1604, Peter, attended only by two of his young diſciples, preſented himſelf to the king, who then held his court at Dancaz, where he was received with the ſame honours as are beſtowed upon men of the firſt rank, to the great diſcontent of the Abyſſinian monks, who eaſily foreſaw that their humiliation would certainly follow this exaltation of Petros; nor were they miſtaken. In a diſpute held before the king next day,

day, Peter produced the two boys, as more than ſufficient to ſilence all the theologians in Abyſſinia. Nor can it ever be doubted, by any who know the ignorance of theſe brutiſh prieſts, but that the victory, in theſe ſcholaſtic diſputes, would be fairly, eaſily, and completely on the ſide of the children.

Maſs was then ſaid according to the uſage of the church of Rome, which was followed by a ſermon (among the firſt ever preached in Abyſſinia,) but ſo far ſurpaſſing, in elegance and purity of diction, any thing yet extant in the learned language, Geez, that all the hearers began to look upon this as the firſt miracle on the part of the preacher.

Za Denghel was ſo taken with it, that, from that inſtant, he not only reſolved to embrace the Catholic religion, but declared this his reſolution to ſeveral friends, and ſoon after to Paez himſelf, under an oath of ſecrecy that he ſhould conceal it for a time. This oath, prudently exacted from Peter, was as imprudently rendered uſeleſs by the zeal of the king himſelf, who being of too ſanguine a diſpoſition to temporize after he was convinced, publiſhed a proclamation, forbidding the religious obſervation of Saturday, or the Jewiſh ſabbath, for ever after. He likewiſe ordered letters to be wrote to the pope Clement VIII. and to Philip III. king of Spain and Portugal, wherein he offered them his friendſhip, whilſt he requeſted mechanics to aſſiſt, and Jeſuits to inſtruct his people.

Theſe ſudden and violent meaſures were preſently known; and every wretch that had, from other cauſes,

cauſes, the ſeeds of rebellion ſown in his heart, began now to pretend they were only nouriſhed there by a love and attachment to the true religion.

Many of the courtiers followed the king's example; ſome as courtiers for the ſake of the king's favour, and meaning to adhere to the religion of Rome no longer than it was a faſhion at court, promoted their intereſt, and expoſed them to no danger; others, from their firm attachment to the king, the reſolution to ſupport him as their rightful ſovereign, and a confidence in his ſuperior judgment, and that he beſt knew what was moſt for the kingdom's advantage in its preſent diſtracted ſtate, and for the confirmation of his own power, ſo intimately connected with the welfare of his people. Few, very few it is believed, adopted the Catholic faith, from that one diſcourſe only, however pure the language, however eloquent the preacher. A hundred years and more had paſſed without convincing the Abyſſinians in general, or without any material proof that they were prepared to be ſo.

However, the Jeſuits have quoted an inſtance of this inſtantaneous converſion by the ſermon, which, for their credit I will not omit, though no notice is taken of it in the annals of thoſe times, where it is not indeed to be expected, nor do I mean that it is leſs credible on this account.

An Abyſſinian monk, of very advanced years, came forward to Peter Paez, and ſaid in a loud voice before the king, "Although I have lived to a very great age, without a doubt of the Alexandrian

drian faith, I bleſs God that he has ſpared me to this day, and thereby given me an opportunity of chooſing a better. The things we knew before, you have ſo well explained, that they become ſtill more intelligible; and we are thereby confirmed in our belief. Thoſe things that were difficult, and which we could hardly underſtand, you have made ſo clear, that we now wonder at our own blindneſs in not having ſeen them plainly before. For theſe benefits which I now confeſs to have received, I here make my declaration, that it is my ſtedfaſt purpoſe, with the aſſiſtance of Almighty God, to live and die in the faith you profeſs, and have now preached."

Among thoſe of the court moſt attached to the king was Laeca Mariam, the inſeparable companion of his good and bad fortune, who had followed his maſter from principles of duty and affection, without deſigning to throw away a conſideration upon what were likely to be the conſequences to himſelf. He was reputed, in his character and abilities as a ſoldier, to be equal to Za Selaſſé, but a very different man, compared to him in his qualities of civil life; for he was ſober in his general behaviour, ſparing in diſcourſe, and much more ready to do a good office than to promiſe one; very affable and courteous in his manner, and of ſo humble and unaſſuming a deportment, that it was thought impoſſible to be real in a man, who had ſo often proved his ſuperiority over others upon trial.

This man, a true royaliſt, was one of thoſe that embraced the Catholic religion that day, pro-

bably following the example of the king; and this, in the hands of wicked men their enemies, became very ſoon a pretence for the murder of both; for Za Selaſſé, impatient of a rival in any thing, more eſpecially in military knowledge, began to hold ſeditious aſſemblies, and eſpecially with the monks, whom he taught to believe what the king's conduct daily confirmed, that the Alexandrian faith was totally reprobated, and no religion would be tolerated but that of the church of Rome.

Gojam, a province always inveterate againſt any thing that bore the ſmalleſt inclination to the church of Rome, declared againſt the king; and, before he went to join his aſſociates, the traitor, Za Selaſſé, in a conference he had with the Abuna Petros, propoſed to him to abſolve Za Denghel's ſubjects and ſoldiers from their oaths of allegiance to their ſovereign. The Abuna, a man of very corrupt and bad life, very hearty in the cauſe, and an enemy to the king, was ſtaggered at this propoſal; not that he was averſe to it, becauſe it might do miſchief, but becauſe he doubted whether any ſuch effect would follow it as Za Selaſſé expected; and he, therefore, aſked what good he expected from ſuch a novelty? when this traitor aſſured him, that it would be moſt efficacious for that very reaſon, becauſe it was then firſt introduced: the Abuna forthwith abſolved the ſoldiers and ſubjects of Za Denghel from their allegiance, declaring the king excommunicated and accurſed, together with all thoſe that ſhould ſupport him, or favour his cauſe.

I muſt

I muſt here obſerve, that, though we are now writing the hiſtory of the 17th century, this was the firſt example of any prieſt excommunicating his ſovereign in Abyſſinia, except that of Honorius, who excommunicated Amda Sion for the repeated commiſſion of inceſt. And the doubt the zealot Abuna Petros had of its effect as being a novelty, which fact the Jeſuits themſelves atteſt, ſhews it was a practice that had not its origin in the church of Alexandria. Neither had theſe curſes of the Abuna any viſible effect, till Za Selaſſé had put himſelf at the head of an army raiſed in Gojam. The king was prepared to meet him, and ready to march from Dancaz.

Za Denghel immediately marched out into the plain of Bartcho, and in the way was deſerted, firſt by Ras Athanaſius, then by many of his troops; and, by this great deſertion in his army, found the firſt effects of the Abuna's curſes, inſomuch, that John Gabriel, a Portugueſe officer of the firſt diſtinction, adviſed the king to retire in time, and avoid a battle, by flying to ſtrong-holds for a ſeaſon, till the preſent deluſion among his ſubjects ſhould ceaſe. But the king, thinking himſelf diſhonoured by avoiding the defiance of a rebel, reſolved upon giving Za Selaſſe battle, who, being an able general, knew well the danger he would incur by delay.

It was October 13th 1704 that the king, after drawing up his army in order of battle, placing 200 Portugueſe, with a number of Abyſſinian troops, on the right, took to himſelf the charge of the left, and called for Peter Paez to give him abſolution;

ſolution; but that Jeſuit was occupied at a convenient diſtance in Tigre, by his exorciſms deſtroying ants, butterflies, mice, locuſts, and various other enemies, of much more importance, in his opinion, than the life of a king who had been blindly, but directly conducted to ſlaughter by his fanatical preachings.

The battle began with great appearance of ſucceſs. On the right the Portugueſe, led by old and veteran officers, deſtroyed and overturned every thing before them with their fire-arms: but on the left, where the king commanded, things went otherwiſe, for the whole of this diviſion fled, excepting a body of nobility, his own officers and companions, who remained with him, and fought manfully in his defence. Above all, the king himſelf, trained to a degree of excellence in the uſe of arms, ſtrong and agile in body, in the flower of his age, and an excellent horſeman, performed feats of valour that ſeemed above the power of man: but he and his attendants being ſurrounded by the whole army of Za Selaſſe, and decreaſing in number, were unable to ſupport any longer ſuch diſadvantage.

Laeca Mariam, ſolicitous only for the king's ſafety, charging furiouſly every one that approached, was thruſt through with a lance by a common ſoldier who had approached him unobſerved. The king, deſirous only to avenge his death, threw himſelf like lightning into the oppoſite ſquadron, and received a ſtroke with a lance in his breaſt, which threw him from his horſe on the ground. Grievous as the wound was, he inſtantly recovered himſelf, and, drawing his ſword, continued to fight with as much

much vigour as ever. He was now hemmed in by a ring of ſoldiers, part of whom, afraid of encountering him, remained at a diſtance, throwing miſſile weapons without good direction or ſtrength, as if they had been hunting ſome fierce wild beaſt. Others, wiſhing to take him priſoner, abſtained from ſtriking him, out of regard to his character and dignity; but the traitor, Za Selaſſe, coming up at that inſtant, and ſeeing the king almoſt fainting with fatigue, and covered with wounds, pointed his lance, and ſpurring his horſe, furiouſly ſtruck him in the middle of the forehead, which blow threw the king ſenſeleſs to the ground, where he was afterwards ſlain with many wounds.

The battle ended with the death of Za Denghel; many ſaw him fall, and more his body after the defeat; but no one choſe to be the firſt that ſhould in any way diſpoſe of it, or care to own that they knew it. It lay in this abject ſtate for three days, till it was buried by three peaſants in a corner of the plain, in a little building like a chapel (which I have ſeen) not above ſix feet high, under the ſhade of a very fine tree, in Abyſſinia called it *ſaſſa*: there it lay till ten years after, when Socinios removed it from that humble mauſoleum, and buried it in a monaſtery called Daga, in the lake Dembea, with great pomp and magnificence.

The grief which the death of Za Denghel occaſioned was ſo univerſal, and the odium it brought upon the authors of it ſo great, that neither Za Saleſſe nor Ras Athanaſius dared for a time to take one ſtep towards naming a ſucceſſor, which the fear of Za Denghel, and the uncertainty of victory, had prevented

prevented them from doing by common consent before the battle. There was no doubt but that the election would fall upon Jacob, but he was far off, confined in the mountainous country of Caffa in Narea. The distance was great; the particular place uncertain; the way to it lay through deserts, always dangerous on account of the Galla, and often impassable.

JACOB.

## JACOB.

From 1604 to 1605.

*Makes Propoſals to Socinios, which are rejected—Takes the Field—Bad Conduct and Defeat of Za Selaſſe—Battle of Debra Zeit—Jacob defeated and ſlain.*

DURING the interim, Socinios appeared in Amhara, not as one offering himſelf as a candidate to be ſupported by the ſtrength and intereſt of others, but like a conqueror at the head of a ſmall but well-diſciplined army of veteran troops, ready to compel by force thoſe who ſhould refuſe to ſwear allegiance to him from conviction of his right.

The firſt ſtep he took was to ſend Bela Chriſtos, a nobleman of known worth, to Ras Athanaſius then in Gojam, ſtating to him his pretenſions to ſucceed Za Denghel in the kingdom, deſiring his aſſiſtance with his army, and declaring that he would acknowledge the ſervice done him as ſoon as it was in his power. Without waiting for an anſwer, at the head of his little army he paſſed the Nile, and entered Gojam. He then ſent a ſecond meſſage to Ras Athanaſius, acquainting him that he was at hand, and ordering him to prepare to receive him as his ſovereign.

This abrupt and confident conduct of Socinios very much diſconcerted Ras Athanaſius. He had as yet concerted nothing with his friend Za Selaſſe, and it was now late to do it. There was no perſon then within the bounds of the empire that ſolicited

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the crown but Socinios, and he was now at hand, and very much favoured by the ſoldiers. For theſe reaſons, he thought it beſt to put a good face upon the matter in his preſent ſituation. He, therefore, met Socinios as required, and joined his army, as if it had been his free choice, and ſaluted him king in the midſt of repeated cheerful congratulations of both armies now united.

Having ſucceeded in this to his wiſh, Socinios loſt no time to try the ſame experiment with Za Selaſſe, who was then in Dembea, the province of which he was governor. To him he ſent this meſſage, "That God by his grace having called him to the throne of his anceſtors, he was now on his march to Dembea, where he requeſted him to prepare his troops to receive him, and diſpoſe them to deſerve the favours that he was ready to confer upon all of them." Za Saleſſe remained for a while as if thunder-ſtruck by ſo peremptory an intimation. Of all maſters he moſt wiſhed for Jacob, becauſe, from experience, he thought he could govern him. Of all maſters he moſt feared Socinios, becauſe he knew he poſſeſſed capacity and qualities that would naturally determine him to govern alone. After having concerted with his friends, he ſent Socinios anſwer, "That not having till now known any thing of his claims or intentions, he had ſent an invitation to Jacob into Narea, whoſe anſwer he expected; but that, in caſe Jacob did not appear, he then would receive Socinios with every mark of duty and affection, and hoped he would grant him the ſhort delay to which he had inadvertently, though innocently, engaged himſelf."

This

This anſwer did in no ſhape pleaſe Socinios, who diſpatched the meſſenger immediately with this declaration, "That he was already king, and would never cede his right to Jacob, who was depoſed and judged unworthy to reign; no nor even to his father Melec Segued, though he ſhould riſe again from the grave, and claim the throne he had ſo long ſat upon."

Za Selaſſe, eaſily penetrating that there was no peace in Socinios's intentions, firſt impriſoned the meſſenger, and, inſtead of another anſwer, marched inſtantly with his whole army to ſurpriſe him before he had time to take his meaſures. And in this he ſucceeded. For Socinios being at that inſtant overtaken by ſickneſs, and not knowing what truſt to put in Athanaſius's army, retired in haſte to the mountains of Amhara; while Athanaſius alſo withdrew his troops till he ſhould know upon what terms he ſtood both with Za Selaſſe and the king.

Still no return came from Jacob. The winter was nearly paſt, and not only the ſoldiers, but people of all ranks began to be weary of this interregnum, and heartily wiſhed for their ancient form of government. They ſaid, That ſince Jacob did not appear, there could be no reaſon for excluding Socinios, whoſe title was undoubted, and who had all the qualities neceſſary to make a good king.

Za Selaſſe ſeeing this opinion gained ground among his troops, and fearing they might mutiny and leave him alone, made a virtue of neceſſity: he diſpatched an ambaſſador to acknowledge Socinios as his ſovereign, and declare that he was ready to ſwear allegiance to him. Socinios received

received this embaſſy with great apparent complacency. He ſent in return a monk, in whom he confided, a perſon of great worth and dignity, to be his repreſentative, and receive the homage of Za Selaſſe and his army. On the news of this monk's approach, Za Selaſſe ſent on his part ten men, the moſt reſpectable in his camp, to meet this repreſentative of the king, and conduct him into the camp, where Za Saleſſe, and all his troops, did homage, and ſwore allegiance to Socinios. Feaſts and preſents were now given in the camp, as is uſual at the acceſſion of a new king to the throne, and all the army abandoned themſelves to joy.

Theſe good tidings were immediately communicated both to Socinios and Ras Athanaſius. But, in the midſt of this rejoicing, a meſſenger came from Jacob, informing Za Selaſſe that he was then in Dembea; that he had conferred upon him the title of Ras and Betwudet, that is, had made him the king's lieutenant-general throughout the whole empire. Za Selaſſe, in poſſeſſion of the height of his wiſhes, and making an ample diſtribution among his troops, determined immediately to march and join Jacob in Dembea; but firſt he wrote privately to the ten men that had accompanied the monk to Socinios, that they ſhould withdraw themſelves as ſuddenly and privately as poſſible before the coming of Jacob was known. Eight of theſe were lucky enough to do ſo; two of them were overtaken in the flight and brought back to Socinios, who ordered them to immediate execution.

Ras Athanaſius, ſeeing the proſperous turn that Jacob's affairs had taken, renounced his oath to Socinios,

Socinios, and repaired to Jacob at Coga, while Socinios retired into Amhara at the head of a very reſpectable army, waiting an opportunity to repay Jacob for his ambition, and Athanaſius and Za Selaſſe for their treaſon and perjury towards him.

Although Jacob was now again ſeated on the throne, ſurrounded by the army and great officers of the empire, his mind was always diſturbed with the apprehenſion of Socinios. In order to free himſelf from this anxiety, he employed Socinios's mother in an application to her ſon, with an offer of peace and friendſhip; promiſing, beſides, that he would give him in property the kingdoms of Amhara, Wallaka, and Shoa, and all the lands which his father had ever poſſeſſed in any other part of Abyſſinia. Socinios ſhortly anſwered, "That what God had given him, no man could take from him; that the whole kingdom belonged to him, nor would he ever relinquiſh any part of it but with his life. He adviſed Jacob to conſider this, and peaceably reſign a crown which did not belong to him; and the attempting to keep which, would involve him and his country in a ſpeedy deſtruction."

Upon this defiance, ſeeing Socinios implacable, Jacob took the field, and was followed by Za Selaſſe. But this proud and inſolent traitor, who never could confine himſelf within the line of his duty, even under a king of his own chooſing, would not join his forces with Jacob, but vainglorioufly led a ſeparate army, ſubject to his orders alone. In this manner, having ſeparate camps, chooſing different ground, and ſometimes at a conſiderable

ſiderable diſtance from each other, they came up with Socinios in Begemder. Jacob advanced ſo near him that his tent could be diſtinctly ſeen from that of Socinios, and, on the morrow, Jacob and Za Selaſſe, drawing up their armies, offered Socinios battle.

That wiſe prince ſaw too well that he was overmatched; and, though he deſired a battle as much as Jacob, it was not upon ſuch terms as the preſent. He declined it, and kept hovering about them as near as poſſible on the heights and uneven ground, where he could not be forced to fight till it perfectly ſuited his own intereſt.

This refuſal on the part of Socinios did but increaſe Za Selaſſe's pride. He deſpiſed Jacob as a general, and thought that Socinios declining battle was owing only to the apprehenſion he had of his preſence, courage, and abilities. He continued parading with the ſeparate army, perfectly intoxicated with confidence and an imaginary ſuperiority, neglecting all the wholeſome rules of war rigidly adhered to by great generals for the ſake of diſcipline, however diſtant they may be from their enemy.

It was not long before this was told Socinios, who ſoon ſaw his advantage in it, and thereupon reſolved to fight Za Selaſſe ſingly, and watch attentively till he ſhould find him as far as poſſible from Jacob. Nor did he long wait for the occaſion; for Za Selaſſe, attempting to lead his army through very uneven and ſtony ground, called *the Paſs of Mount Defer*, and at a conſiderable diſtance from Jacob, Socinios, attacked him while in the paſs

paſs ſo rudely, that his army, entangled in broken and unknown ground, was ſurrounded and almoſt cut to pieces. Za Selaſſe, with a few followers, ſaved themſelves by the goodneſs of their horſes, and joined the king, being the firſt meſſengers of their own defeat.

Jacob received the news of this misfortune without any apparent concern. On the contrary, he took Za Selaſſe roundly to taſk for having loſt ſuch an army by his miſconduct; and from that time put on a coolneſs of carriage towards him that could not be brooked by ſuch a character. He made direct propoſals to Socinios to join him, if he could be aſſured that his ſervices would be well received. Socinios, though he repoſed no confidence in one that had changed ſides ſo often, was yet, for his own ſake, deſirous to deprive his rival of an officer of ſuch credit and reputation with the ſoldiers. He therefore promiſed him a favourable reception; and, a treaty being concluded, Socinios marched into Gojam, followed by Jacob, and there was joined by Za Selaſſe whom Jacob had made governor of that province.

Jacob, not knowing how far this deſertion might extend, and to ſhew Socinios the little value he ſet upon his new acquiſition, immediately advanced towards him, and offered him battle. This was what Socinios very earneſtly wiſhed for; but, as his army was much inferior to Jacob's he ſeemed to decline it from motives of fear, till he had found ground proper for his army to engage in with advantage.

Jacob, ſenſible of the great ſuperiority he had, (hiſtorians ſay it was nearly thirty to one) grew

every

every day more impatient to bring Socinios to an engagement, fearing he might retreat, and thereby prolong the war, which he had no doubt would be finiſhed by the firſt action. Therefore he was anxious to keep him always in ſight, without regarding the ground through which his eagerneſs led him. Several days the two armies marched ſide by ſide in ſight of each other, till they came to Debra Tzait, or the Mountain of Olives. There Jacob halted; he then advanced a little further, and ſeeing Socinios encamped, he did the ſame in a low and very diſadvantageous poſt on the banks of the river Lebart.

Socinios having now obtained his deſire, early in the morning of the 10th of March 1607 fell ſuddenly upon Jacob cooped up in a low and narrow place, which gave him no opportunity of availing himſelf of his numbers. Jacob ſoon found that he was over-reached by the ſuperior generalſhip of his enemy. Socinios's troops were ſo ſtrongly poſted, that Jacob's ſoldiers found themſelves in a number of ambuſhes they had not foreſeen, ſo that, fighting or flying being equally dangerous to them his whole army was nearly deſtroyed in the field, or in the flight, which was moſt ardently and vigorouſly followed till night, with little loſs on the part of Socinios.

This battle, deciſive enough by the rout and diſperſion of the enemy, became ſtill more ſo from two circumſtances attending it: The firſt was the death of his competitor, who fell unknown among a herd of common ſoldiers in the beginning of the action, without having performed, in his own perſon, any

thing

thing worthy of the character he had to ſuſtain, or that could enable any ſpectator to give an account in what place he fell; the conſequence of which was, that he was thought to be alive many years afterwards. The ſecond was the death of the Abuna Petros. This prieſt had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in Za Denghel's reign, by abſolving the king's ſubjects and ſoldiers from their oaths of allegiance, which was followed by the unfortunate death of Za Denghel in the plain of Bartcho. Vain of the importance he had acquired by the ſucceſs of his treaſon, he had purſued the ſame conduct with regard to Socinios, and followed Jacob to battle, where, truſting to his character and habit for the ſafety of his perſon, he neglected the danger that he ran amidſt a flying army. While occupied in uttering vain curſes and excommunications againſt the conquerors, he was known, by the crucifix he held in his hand, by a Mooriſh ſoldier of Socinios, who thruſt him through with a lance, then cut his head off, and carried it to the king.

The Abyſſinian annals ſtate, that, immediately after ſeeing the head of Abuna Peter, Socinios ordered a retreat to be ſounded, and that no more of his enemies ſhould be ſlain. On the contrary, the Jeſuits have ſaid, that the purſuit was continued even after night; for that a body of horſe, among whom were many Portugueſe belonging to the army of Jacob, flying from Socinios's troops, fell over a very high precipice, it being ſo dark that they did not diſcover it; and that one ſoldier, called Manuel Gonſalez, finding his horſe leave him, as it were flying, lighted luckily on a tree, where,

where, in the utmoſt trepidation, he ſat all night, not knowing where he was. This fear was greatly encreaſed in the morning, when he beheld the horſes, and the men who were his companions, lying dead and daſhed to pieces in the plain below.

Ras Athanaſius, who had followed the party of Jacob, narrowly eſcaped by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe, and hid himſelf in the monaſtery of Dima, at no great diſtance from the field of battle; and Peter Paez, from remembrance of his former good offices, having recommended him to Sela Chriſtos, Socinios's brother-in-law, he was pardoned; but loſing favour every day, his effects and lands having been taken from him on different occaſions, he is ſaid at laſt to have died for want, juſtly deſpiſed by all men for unſteadineſs in allegiance to his ſovereigns, by which he had been the occaſion of the death of two excellent princes, had frequently endangered the life and ſtate of the third, and had been the means of the ſlaughter of many thouſands of their ſubjects, worthier men than himſelf, as they fell in the diſcharge of their duty. But before his death he had ſtill this further mortification, that his wife, daughter of Sertza Denghel, called Melec Segued, voluntarily forſook his bed and retired to a ſingle life.

SOCINIOS,

## SOCINIOS, OR MELEC SEGUED.

From 1605 to 1632.

*Socinios embraces the Romiſh Religion—War with Sennaar—With the Shepherds—Violent Conduct of the Romiſh Patriarch—Laſta rebels—Defeated at Wainadega—Socinios reſtores the Alexandrian Religion—Reſigns his Crown to his eldeſt Son.*

SOCINIOS, now univerſally acknowledged as king, began his reign with a degree of moderation which there was no reaſon to expect of him. Often as he had been betrayed, many and inveterate as his enemies were, now he had them in his power, he ſought no vengeance for injuries which he had ſuffered, but freely pardoned every one, receiving all men graciouſly without reproach or reflections, or even depriving them of their employments.

Being informed, however, that one Mahardin, a Moor, had been the firſt to break through that reſpect due to a king, by wounding Za Denghel at the battle of Bartcho, he ordered him to be brought at noon-day before the gate of his palace, and his head to be there ſtruck off with an ax, as a juſt atonement for violated majeſty.

The king, now retired to Coga, gave his whole attention to regulate thoſe abuſes, and repair thoſe loſſes, which this long and bloody war had occaſioned. He had two brothers by the mother's ſide, men of great merit, Sela Chriſtos, and Emana Chriſtos, deſtined to ſhare the principal part in the king's confidence and councils.

Bela Chriſtos, a man of great family, who had been attached to him ſince he formed his firſt pretenſions to the crown, was called to court to take his ſhare in the glory and dangers of this reign, which it was eaſy to ſee would be a very active one; for every province around was full of rebels and independents, who had ſhaken off the yoke of government, paid no taxes, nor ſhewed other reſpect to the king than juſt what at the moment conſiſted with their own intereſt or inclination.

The Portugueſe ſoldiers, remnants of the army which came into Abyſſinia under Chriſtopher de Gama, had multiplied exceedingly, and their children had been trained by their parents in the uſe of fire-arms. They were at this time incorporated in one body under John Gabriel a veteran officer, who ſeems to have conſtantly remained with the king, while his ſoldiers (at leaſt great part of them) had followed the fortune they thought moſt likely to prevail ever ſince the time of Claudius.

Menas did not eſteem them enough to keep them in his army at the expence of enduring the ſeditious converſations of their prieſts reviling and undervaluing his religion and government. He therefore baniſhed them the kingdom; but, inſtead of obeying, they joined the Baharnagaſh, then confederated with the Turks and in rebellion againſt his ſovereign, as we have already mentioned. Sertza Denghel ſeems to have ſcarcely ſet any value upon them after this, and made very little uſe of them during his long reign. Upon the infant Jacob's being put upon the throne they all adhered to him; and, after Jacob's baniſhment, part of them had attached

attached themſelves to Za Denghel, and behaved with great ſpirit in the battle of Bartcho.

Upon Jacob's reſtoration they had joined him, and with him were defeated at the deciſive battle of Lebart, being all united againſt Socinios; ſo that, on whatever ſide they declared themſelves, they were conſtantly beaten by the cowardice of the Abyſſinians with whom they were joined. Yet, tho' they had been ſo often on the ſide that was unfortunate, their particular loſs had been always inconſiderable; becauſe, whatever was the fate of the reſt of the army, none of the country troops would ever ſtand before them, and they made their retreat from amidſt a routed army nearly in the ſame ſafety as if they had been conquerors; becauſe it was not, for ſeveral reaſons, the intereſt of the conquerors to attack them, nor was the experiment ever likely to be an eligible one to the aſſailants.

Socinios followed a conduct oppoſite to that of Menas. He determined to attach the Portugueſe wholly to himſelf, and to make them depend upon him entirely. For this reaſon he made great advances to their prieſts, and ſent for Peter Paez to court, where, after the uſual diſputes upon the pope's ſupremacy, and the two natures in Chriſt, maſs was ſaid, and a ſermon preached, with much the ſame ſucceſs as it had been in the time of Za Denghel, and with full as great offence to the Abyſſinian clergy.

The province of Dembea, lying round the lake Tzana, is the moſt fertile and the moſt cultivated country in Abyſſinia. It is entirely flat, and ſeems

to have been produced by the decreaſe of water in the lake, which, from very viſible marks, appears to have formerly been of four times the extent of what it is at preſent. Dembea, however fruitful, has one inconvenience to which all level countries in this climate are ſubject: a mortal fever rages in the whole extent of it, from March to Heder Michael, the eighth day of November, when there are always gentle ſhowers. This dangerous fever ſtops immediately upon the falling of theſe rains, as ſuddenly as the plague does upon the firſt falling of the nucta, or dew, in Egypt.

On the ſouth ſide of this lake the country riſes into a rocky promontory, which forms a peninſula and runs far into the lake. Nothing can be more beautiful than this ſmall territory, elevated, but not to an inconvenient height, above the water which ſurrounds it on all ſides, except the ſouth. The climate is delightful, and no fevers or other diſeaſes rage here. The proſpect of the lake and diſtant mountains is magnificent beyond European conception, and Nature ſeems to have pointed this place out for pleaſure, health, and retirement. Paez had aſked and obtained this territory from the king, who, he ſays, gave him a grant of it in perpetuity. The manner of this he deſcribes: "A civil officer is ſent on the part of the king, who calls together all the proprietors of the neighbouring lands, and viſits the bounds with them; they kill a goat at particular diſtances, and bury the heads under ground upon the boundary line of this regality; which heads, Paez ſays, it is felony to dig

dig up or remove; and this is a mark or gift of land in perpetuity."

Without contradicting the form of burying the goats heads, I ſhall only ſay, I never ſaw or heard of it, nor is there ſuch a thing as a gift of land in *perpetuum* known in Abyſſinia. All the land is the king's; he gives it to whom he pleaſes during pleaſure, and reſumes it when it is his will. As ſoon as he dies the whole land in the kingdom (that of the Abuna excepted) is in the diſpoſal of the crown; and not only ſo, but, by the death of every preſent owner, his poſſeſſions, however long enjoyed, revert to the king, and do not fall to the eldeſt ſon. It is by proclamation the poſſeſſion and property is reconveyed to the heir, who thereby becomes abſolute maſter of the land for his own life or pleaſure of the king, under obligation of military and other ſervices; and that exception, on the part of the Abuna, is not in reſpect to the ſanctity of his perſon, or charge, but becauſe it is founded upon treaty *, and is become part of the conſtitution.

The Abyſſinians ſaw, with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, the erection of a convent ſtrongly built with ſtone and lime, of which before they had no knowledge, and their wonder was ſtill increaſed, when, at deſire of the king, Paez undertook, of the ſame materials, to build a palace for him at the ſouthmoſt end of this peninſula, which is called Gorgora. It was with amazement mixed with terror that

* We have mentioned this treaty in the reign of Icon Amlac.

that they ſaw a houſe riſe upon houſe, for ſo they call the different ſtories.

Paez here diſplayed his whole ingenuity, and the extent of his abilities. He alone was architect, maſon, ſmith, and carpenter, and with equal dexterity managed all the inſtruments uſed by each profeſſion in the ſeveral ſtages of the work. The palace was what we ſhall call wainſcoted with cedar, divided into ſtate-rooms, and private apartments likewiſe for the queen and nobility of both ſexes that formed the court, with accommodations and lodgings for guards and ſervants.

As the king had at that time a view to attack the rebels, the Agows and Damots, and to check the inroads of the Galla into Gojam, he ſaw with pleaſure a work going on that provided the moſt commodious reſidence where his occupation in all probability was chiefly to lie. His principal aim was to bring into his kingdom a number of Portugueſe troops, which, joined to thoſe already there, and the converts he propoſed to make after embracing the Catholic religion, might enable him to extirpate that rebellious ſpirit which ſeemed now univerſally to have taken poſſeſſion of the hearts of his ſubjects, and eſpecially of the clergy, of late taught, he did not ſeem to know how, that moſt dangerous privilege of curſing and excommunicating kings. He had not ſeen in Peter Paez and his fellow-prieſts any thing but ſubmiſſion, and a love of monarchy; their lives and manners were truly apoſtolical; and he never thought, till he came afterwards to be convinced upon proof, that the patriarch from Rome, and the Abuna from Cairo,

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tho' they differed in their opinion as to the two natures in Chriſt, did both heartily agree in the deſire of erecting eccleſiaſtical dominion and tyranny upon the ruins of monarchy and civil power, and of effecting a total ſubordination of the civil government, either to the chairs of St. Mark or St. Peter.

In the winter, during the ceſſation from work, Socinios called Paez from Gorgora to Coga, where he enlarged the territory the Jeſuits then had at Fremona. After which he declared to him his reſolution to embrace the Catholic religion; and, as Paez ſays, preſented him with two letters, one to the king of Portugal, the other to the pope: the firſt dated the 10th of December 1607, the latter the 14th of October of the ſame year. Theſe letters ſay not a word of his intended converſion, nor of ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome; but complain only of the diſorderly ſtate of his kingdom, and the conſtant inroads of the Galla, earneſtly requeſting a number of Portugueſe ſoldiers to free them from their yoke, as formerly, under the conduct of Chriſtopher de Gama, they had delivered Abyſſinia from that of the Moors.

While theſe things paſſed at Coga, two pieces of intelligence were brought to the king, both very material in themſelves, but which affected him very differently. The firſt was, that the traitor Za Selaſſé, while making one of his incurſions into Gojam, had fallen into an ambuſh laid for him by the Toluma Galla, guardians of that province on the banks of the Nile, and that theſe Pagans had ſlain him and cut off his head, which they then preſented to

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the king, who ordered it to be expoſed on the lance whereon it was fixed, in the moſt conſpicuous place in the front of his palace.

This was the end of Ras Za Selaſſé, a name held in deteſtation to this day throughout all Abyſſinia. Though his death was juſt ſuch as it ought to have been, yet, as it was in an advanced time of life, he ſtill became a hurtful example, by ſhewing that it was poſſible for a man to live to old age in the continual practice of murder and treaſon.

He was of low birth, as I have already obſerved, of a Pagan nation of Troglodytes, of the loweſt eſteem in Abyſſinia, employed always in the meaneſt and moſt ſervile occupations, in which capacity he ſerved firſt in a private family. Being obſerved to have an active, quick turn of mind, he was preferred to the ſervice of Melec Segued, upon whoſe death he was ſo much eſteemed by his ſon Jacob, for the expertneſs and capacity he ſhewed in buſineſs, that he gave him large poſſeſſions, and appointed him afterwards to ſeveral ranks in the army; having regularly advanced through the ſubordinate degrees of military command, always with great ſucceſs, he was made at laſt general; and being now of importance ſufficient to be able to ruin his benefactor, he joined Ras Athanaſius, who had rebelled againſt Jacob, by whom he was taken priſoner, and, being mercifully dealt with, only baniſhed to Narea. From this diſgraceful ſituation he was freed by Za Denghel, who conferred upon him the moſt lucrative important employment in the ſtate. In return, he rebelled againſt Za Denghel; and at Barucho deprived him of his kingdom

kingdom and life. Upon Jacob's acceſſion he was appointed Betwudet, the firſt place in Ethiopia, after the king, and governor of Gojam, one of the largeſt and richeſt provinces in Abyſſinia. But he ſoon after again forſook Jacob, ſwore allegiance to Socinios, and joined him.

Not content with all this, he began to form ſome new deſigns while with the court at Coga; and, having ſaid to ſome of the king's ſervants over wine, that it was propheſied to him he ſhould kill three kings, which he had verified in two, and was waiting for the third, this ſpeech was repeated to Socinios, who ordered Za Selaſſé to be apprehended; and, though he moſt juſtly deſerved death, the king mercifully commuted his puniſhment to baniſhment to the top of Oureé Amba, which ſignifies the Great Mountain upon the high ridge, called *Guſman*, near the banks of the Nile; and, though cloſe confined in the caves on the top of that mountain, after a year's impriſonment he eſcaped to Walaka, and there declared himſelf captain of a band of robbers, with which he infeſted the province of Gojam, when he was ſlain by a peaſant, and his head cut off and ſent to Socinios, who very much rejoiced in the preſent, and diſpoſed of it as we have mentioned.

The ſecond piece of intelligence the emperor received was that in the mountains of Habab, contiguous to Maſuah, where is the famous monaſtery of the monks of St. Euſtathius, called *Eiſan*; a perſon appeared calling himſelf Jacob, ſon of Sertza Denghel, and pretending to have eſcaped from the battle of Lebart; thus, taking advantage of the circumſtance

cumſtance of Jacob's body not having been found in the field among the dead after that engagement, he pretended he had been ſo grievouſly wounded in the teeth and face that it was not poſſible to ſuffer the deformity to appear; for which reaſon, as he ſaid, but, as it appeared afterwards, to conceal the little reſemblance he bore to Jacob, he wrapped about his head the corner of his upper cloth, and ſo concealed one ſide of his face entirely.

All Tigré haſtened to join this impoſtor as their true ſovereign; who, finding himſelf now at the head of an army, came down from the mountains of Biſan, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Dobarwa upon the Mareb, where he had a new acceſſion of ſtrength.

The ſhape of the crown in Abyſſinia is that of the hood, or capa, which the prieſts wear when ſaying maſs. It is compoſed of ſilver, ſometimes of gold, ſometimes of both metals, mixed and lined with blue ſilk. It is made to cover part of the forehead, both cheeks, and the hinder part of the neck likewiſe to the joining of the ſhoulders. A crown of this ſhape could not but be of great ſervice in hiding the terrible ſcars with which the impoſtor's face was ſuppoſed to be deformed. He had accordingly got one made at Maſuah, beat very thin out of a few ounces of gold which he had taken from a caravan that he had robbed. He wore it conſtantly upon his head as a token that he was not a candidate for the crown, but real ſovereign, who had worn that mark of power from his infancy.

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The news of this impoſtor, with the uſual exaggeration of followers, ſoon came to Sela Chriſtos, governor of Tigre, who, ſeeing that the affair became more ſerious every day, reſolved to attempt to check it. He conceived, however, he had little truſt to put in the troops of his province, who all of them were wavering whether they ſhould not join the rebel. His ſole dependence, then, was upon the troops of his own houſehold, veteran ſoldiers, well paid and cloathed, and firmly attached to his perſon, and likewiſe upon the Portugueſe. Above all, being himſelf a man of conſummate courage and prudence, he was far from judging of the power of his enemy by the multitude of rabble which compoſed it.

As ſoon as the armies came in preſence of each other, Jacob offered the governor battle. But no ſooner did the impoſtor's troops ſee the eagerneſs with which the ſmall but choſen band ruſhed upon them, than they fled and diſperſed; and though Sela Chriſtos had taken every precaution to cut off the pretended Jacob from his uſual ſculking places, it was not poſſible to overtake or apprehend him; for he arrived in ſafety in one of the higheſt and moſt inacceſſible mountains of the diſtrict, whence he looked down on Sela Chriſtos and his army without apprehenſion, having behind him a retreat to the more diſtant and leſs known mountains of Hamazen, ſhould his enemies preſs him further.

As long as Sela Chriſtos remained with his little army in that country, the impoſtor Jacob continued on the higheſt part of the mountains, accompanied only by two or three of his moſt intimate friends,

friends, who being people whoſe families dwelt in the plain below, brought him conſtant intelligence of what paſſed there.

Sela Chriſtos, wiſhing by all means to engage the enemy, marched into a conſiderable plain called *Mai-aquel;* but ſeeing on every ſide the top of each mountain guarded by troops of ſoldiers, he was afraid he had advanced too far; and, apprehenſive leſt he ſhould be incloſed in the midſt of a multitude ſo poſted, he began to think how he could beſt make his retreat before he was ſurrounded by ſo numerous enemies. But they no ſooner ſaw his intentions by the movement of his army, than, leaving their leader as a ſpectator above, they fell on all ſides upon Sela Chriſtos's troops, who, having no longer any ſafety but in their arms, began to attack the hill that was next them, which they ſtormed as they would do a caſtle. Finding the ſmall reſiſtance that each of theſe poſts made, the governor divided his ſmall army into ſo many ſeparate bodies, leaving his cavalry in the plain below, who, without fighting, were only employed in ſlaughtering thoſe his troops had diſlodged from their ſeparate poſts.

The day after, the impoſtor aſſembling his ſcattered troops, retreated towards the ſea into the territory of Hamazen, between the country of the Baharnagaſh and the mountains of the Habab.

Sela Chriſtos, finding that, while he purſued his victory in theſe diſtant parts, the ſpirit of rebellion increaſed nearer home, reſolved to inform the king his brother of the unpromiſing ſtate of his affairs in Tigre, and the great neceſſity there was of his preſence

ſence there. Nor did Socinios loſe a moment after receiving this intelligence from Sela Chriſtos, although it had found him, in one reſpect, very ill prepared for ſuch an undertaking; for he had ſent all his horſe from Coga upon an expedition againſt the Shangalla and Gongas, nations on the north-weſt border of this kingdom; ſo that, when he marched from Wainadega, his cavalry amounted to 530 men only, beſides a ſmall reinforcement brought by Emana Chriſtos, governor of Amhara.

It was at Aibo the king turned off the road to Tigre towards Begemder, and that day encamped at Wainadega. From Wainadega he advanced to Davada; and, croſſing the Reb, he turned off by the way of Zang, and encamped at Kattame. He then proceeded to Tzame, and arrived at Hader. At this place ſome ſpies informed him that an advanced party of the Galla Marawa were ſtrongly lodged in a hill not far off. Upon receiving this notice, Socinios ordered his army to refreſh themſelves, to extinguiſh all lights, and march with as little noiſe as poſſible.

While it was ſcarce dawn of day, a ſtrong detachment of the king's army ſurrounded the hill where the Galla were, and found there a ſmall number of theſe ſavages placed like piquets to give the alarm and prevent ſurpriſe. Eleven Galla were ſlain, and their heads cut off and carried to the king, the firſt fruits of his expedition.

Reſolving to profit by this early advantage, Socinios followed with all diligence, and came in ſight of the army of the enemy, without their having taken the ſmalleſt alarm. They were lying

cloſely

cloſely and ſecurely in their huts that they had made. A large ravine full of trees and ſtumps divided the two armies, and in part concealed them from each other. The king ordered Emana Chriſtos, and Abeton Welleta Chriſtos, to paſs the ravine with the horſe, and fall upon the Galla ſuddenly, throwing the heads of thoſe of the advanced guard they had cut off on the ground towards them.

Before the king's horſe had paſſed the ravine, the Galla were alarmed, and mounted on horſe-back. As they never fight in order, it required no time to form; but they received the king's cavalry ſo rudely, that, though Emana Chriſtos and the young prince behaved with the utmoſt courage, they were beat back, and obliged to fly with conſiderable loſs, being entangled in the buſhes. No ſooner did the king obſerve that his horſe were engaged, than he ordered his troops to paſs the ravine to ſupport them, and was deſirous to bring on a general engagement. But a panic had ſeized his troops. They would not ſtir, but ſeemed benumbed and overcome by the cold of the morning, ſpectators of the ruin of the cavalry.

Emana Chriſtos, and thoſe of the cavalry that had eſcaped the maſſacre, had repaſſed the ravine, and diſperſed themſelves in the front of the foot; while the victorious Marawa, like ignorant ſavages, puſhed their victory to the very front of the king's line. Socinios, ordering all the drums of the army to beat and trumpets to ſound, to excite ſome ſpirit in his troops, advanced himſelf before any of his ſoldiers, and ſlew the firſt Galla within his reach with his own hands. The example and danger the king expoſed himſelf to, raiſed the indignation of the troops.

troops. They poured in crowds, without regarding order, upon the Marawa, great part of whom had already paſſed the ravine, and all that had paſſed it were cut to pieces.

The Galla, unable to ſtand this loſs, fled from the field, and immediately after left Begemder. The want of horſe on the king's part ſaved their whole army from the deſtruction which would infallibly have been the conſequence of a vigorous purſuit, through a country where every inhabitant was an enemy. The king after this returned to his palace at Coga to finiſh the buſineſs he had in hand.

In the mean time, a report was ſpread through all Tigre, that the king had been defeated by the Galla, and that Ras Sela Chriſtos had repaired to Gondar in conſequence of that diſaſter. The impoſtor Jacob loſt no time in taking advantage of this report. He deſcended from his natural fortreſs, and, in conjunction with the governor of Axum, ſlew ſeveral people, and committed many ravages in Sire. The Ras no ſooner learned that he was encamped on plain ground, than he preſented himſelf with the little army he had before; and, though the odds againſt him were exceſſive, yet by his preſence and conduct, the rebels, though they fought this time with more than ordinary obſtinacy, were defeated with great loſs, and their leader, the ſuppoſed Jacob, forced again to his inacceſſible mountains.

Socinios having now finiſhed the affairs which detained him at Coga, and being informed that the ſouthern Galla, reſenting the defeat of the Marawa, had entered into a league to invade Abyſſinia with united

united forces, and a complete army to burn and lay waſte the whole country between the Tacazze and Tzana, and to attack the emperror in his capital of Coga, which they were determined to deſtroy, ſent orders to Kaſmati Julius, his ſon-in-law, to join him immediately with what forces he had; as alſo to Kefla Chriſtos; and, being joined by both theſe officers and their troops, he marched and took poſt at Ebenaat in the diſtrict of Beleſſen, in the way by which the Galla intended to paſs to the capital, and he reſolved to await them there.

The Galla advanced in their uſual manner, burning and deſtroying churches and villages, and murdering without mercy all that were ſo unfortunate as to fall into their hands. The king bore theſe exceſſes of his enemy with the patience of a good general, who ſaw they contributed to his advantage. He therefore did not offer to check any of their diſorders, but by not reſiſting rather hoped to encourage them. He had an army in number ſuperior, and this was ſeldom the caſe; but in quality there was no compariſon, five of the king's troops being equal to twenty of the enemy, and this was the general proportion in which they fought. He, therefore, contented himſelf with chooſing proper ground to engage, and improving it by ambuſhes ſuch as the nature of the field permitted or ſuggeſted.

It was the 7th of January 1608, early in the morning, that the Galla preſented themſelves to Socinios in battle, in a plain below Ebenaat, ſurrounded with ſmall hills covered with wood. The Galla filled the whole plain, as if voluntarily devoting

voting themſelves to deſtruction, and from the hills and buſhes were deſtroyed by fire-arms from enemies they did not ſee, who with a ſtrong body took poſſeſſion of the place through which they entered, and by which they were to return no more.

Socinios that day, for what particular reaſon does not appear, diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the midſt of the Galla, by fighting like a common ſoldier. It is thought by the hiſtorians of thoſe times, that he had received advice while at Coga, that his ſon-in-law Julius intended to rebel, and therefore he meant to diſcourage him by compariſon of their perſonal abilities. This, however, is not probable; the king's character was eſtabliſhed, and nothing more could be added to it. However that may be, all turned to the diſadvantage of the Galla. No general or other officer thought himſelf entitled to ſpare his perſon more than the king; all fought like common ſoldiers; and, being the men beſt armed and mounted, and moſt experienced in the field, they contributed in proportion to the ſlaughter of the day. About 12,000 men on the part of the Galla were killed upon the ſpot; the very few that remained were deſtroyed by the peaſants, whilſt 400 men only fell on the part of the king, ſo it was a maſſacre rather than a battle.

Socinios now reſolved to try his fortune againſt the impoſtor Jacob, and with that reſolution he croſſed Lamalmon, deſcending to the Tacazze in his way to Sire. Here, as on the frontiers of his province, he was met by Sela Chriſtos, who brought Peter Paez along with them. Both were kindly received by the king, who encamped in the large plain before Axum, in conſequence of a reſo-

lation he had long taken of being crowned with all the ancient ceremonies uſed on this occaſion by former kings, while the royal reſidence was in the province of Tigre.

It was on the 18th of March, according to their account, the day of our Saviour's firſt coming to Jeruſalem, that this feſtival began. His army conſiſted of about 30,000 men. All the great officers, all the officers of ſtate, and the court then preſent, were every man dreſſed in the richeſt and gayeſt manner. Nor was the other ſex behindhand in the ſplendour of their appearance. The king, dreſſed in crimſon damaſk, with a great chain of gold round his neck, his head bare, mounted upon a horſe richly capariſoned, advanced at the head of his nobility, paſſed the outer court, and came to the paved way before the church. Here he was met by a number of young girls, daughters of the umbares, or ſupreme judges, together with many noble virgins ſtanding on the right and left of the court.

Two of the nobleſt of theſe held in their hands a crimſon cord of ſilk, ſomewhat thicker than common whip-cord, but of a looſer texture, ſtretched acroſs from one company to another, as if to ſhut up the road by which the king was approaching the church. When this cord was prepared and drawn tight about breaſt-high by the girls, the king entered, advancing at a moderate pace, curvetting and ſhewing the management of his horſe. He was ſtopped by the tenſion of this ſtring, while the damſels on each ſide aſking who he was, were anſwered, "I am your king, the king of Ethiopia."

To

To which they replied with one voice, "You "shall not paſs; you are not our king."

The king then retires ſome paces, and then preſents himſelf as to paſs, and the cord is again drawn acroſs his way by the young women ſo as to prevent him, and the queſtion repeated, "Who "are you?" The king anſwered, "I am your king, "the king of Iſrael." But the damſels reſolved, even on this ſecond attack, not to ſurrender but upon their own terms; they again anſwer, "You "ſhall not paſs; you are not our king."

The third time, after retiring, the king advances with a pace and air more determined; and the cruel virgins again preſenting the cord and aſking who he is, he anſwers, "I am your king, the king "of Sion;" and, drawing his ſword, cuts the ſilk cord aſunder. Immediately upon this the young women cry, "It is a truth, you are our king; "truly you are the king of Sion." Upon which they begin to ſing Hallelujah, and in this they are joined by the court and army upon the plain; fire-arms are diſcharged, drums and trumpets ſound; and the king, amidſt theſe acclamations and rejoicings, advances to the foot of the ſtair of the church, where he diſmounts, and there ſits down upon a ſtone, which, by its remains, apparently was an altar of Anubis, or the dog-ſtar: At his feet there is a large ſlab of free-ſtone, on which is the inſcription mentioned by Poncet, and which ſhall be quoted hereafter, when I come to ſpeak of the ruins of Axum.

After the king comes to the nebrit, or keeper of the book of the law in Axum, ſuppoſed to repreſent

Azarias the ſon of Zadock; then the twelve umbares, or ſupreme judges, who with Azarias, accompanied Menilek, the ſon of Solomon, when he brought the book of the law from Jeruſalem, and theſe are ſuppoſed to repreſent the twelve tribes. After theſe follow the Abuna at the head of the prieſts, and the Itchegué at the head of the monks; then the court, who all paſs through the aperture made by the diviſion of the ſilk cord which remains ſtill upon the ground.

The king is firſt anointed, then crowned, and is accompanied half up the ſteps by the ſinging prieſts, called Depteras, chaunting pſalms and hymns. Here he ſtops at a hole made for the purpoſe in one of the ſteps, and is there fumigated with incenſe and myrrh, aloes and caſſia. Divine ſervice is then celebrated: and, after receiving the ſacrament, he returns to the camp, where fourteen days ſhould regularly be ſpent in feaſting, and all manner of rejoicing and military exerciſe.

The king is, by the old cuſtom, obliged to give a number of preſents, the particulars of which are ſtated in the deſtar, or treaſury-book, the value, the perſon to whom they are due, and the time of giving; but a great part of theſe are gone into deſuetude ſince the removal of the court from Tigré, as alſo many of the offices are now ſuppreſſed, and with them the preſents due to them.

The nobles and the court were likewiſe obliged to give preſents to the king upon that occaſion. The preſent from the governor of Axum is two lions and a fillet of ſilk, upon which is wrote, "*Mo Anbaſa am Nizilet Solomon am Negade Jude*—

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"The lion of the tribe of Judah and race of Solo-"mon hath overcome;" this ſerves as a form of inveſtiture of lands that the king grants, a riband bearing this inſcription being tied round the head of the perſon to whom the lands are given.

This governor was then in rebellion, ſo did not aſſiſt at the ceremony. Notwithſtanding the difference of expence which I have mentioned, by ſuppreſſing places, preſents, and dues, the king Tecla Haimanout told me at Gondar, that when he was in Tigré, driven there by the late rebellion, Ras Michael had ſome thoughts of having him crowned there in contempt of his enemies; but, by the moſt moderate calculation that could be made, not to turn the ceremony into ridicule by parſimony, it would have coſt 20,000 ounces of gold, or L. 50,000 Sterling; upon which he laid aſide the thoughts of it, ſaying to the king, "Sir, truſt to me, 20,000 ounces of Tigré iron ſhall crown you better; if more is wanted, I will beſtow it upon your enemies with pleaſure till they are ſatisfied;" meaning the iron balls with which his ſoldiers loaded their muſquets.

After the coronation was over, the king paſſed the Mareb, deſiring to finiſh his campaign by the death of his competitor Jacob; but that impoſtor knew too well the ſuperiority of his rival, and hid himſelf in the inmoſt receſſes, without other attendants than a few goats, who furniſhed him with their milk, as well as their ſociety.

Socinios left the affair of the rebel Jacob to be ended by Amſala Chriſtos, an officer of great prudence, whom he made governor of Tigré; and, taking

taking his brother Ras Sela Chriſtos along with him, returned to Coga*. Amſala Chriſtos being ſeized with a grievous ſickneſs, ſaw how vain it was for him to purſue the ſuppreſſion of a rebellion conducted by ſuch a head as this impoſtor Jacob, and therefore ſecretly applied to two young men, Zara Johannes and Amha Georgis, brothers, and ſons of the Shum Welled Georgis, who had committed murder, and were outlawed by Socinios, and, keeping hid in the mountains, had joined in fellowſhip with the impoſtor Jacob.

Theſe, gained by the promiſe of pardon given them by Amſala Chriſtos, choſe an opportunity which their intimacy gave them, and, falling upon Jacob unawares in his retirement, they ſlew him, cut his head off, and ſent it to the king at Coga, who received it very thankfully, and returned it to Tigré to Amſala Chriſtos, to be expoſed publicly in all the province to undeceive the people; for it now appeared, that he had neither ſcars in his face, broken jaw, nor loſs of teeth, but that the covering was intended only to conceal the little reſemblance he bore to king Jacob, ſlain, as we have ſeen, at the battle of Lebart; and he was now found to have been a herdſman, in thoſe very mountains of Biſan to which he had ſo often fled for refuge while his rebellion laſted.

The king, in his return from Tigre, paſſing by Fremona, ſent to the Jeſuits there thirty ounces of gold, about L. 75 Sterling, for their immediate exigency; teſtifying, in the moſt gracious manner, his

* Then the metropolis upon the Lake Tzana.

his regret, "That the many affairs in which he was engaged had prevented him from hearing maſs in their convent, as he very ſincerely wiſhed to do; but he left with them the Abuna Simon to whom he had recommended to ſtudy their religion, and be a friend to it."

In this he ſhewed his want of penetration and experience; for though he had ſeen wars between ſoldier and ſoldier, who, after having been in the moſt violent ſtate of enmity, had died in defence of each other as friends, he was not aware of that degree of enmity which reigns upon difference of opinion, not to ſay religion, between prieſt and prieſt. It was not long, however, before he ſaw it, and the example was in the perſon of his preſent friend the Abuna Simon.

While Socinios was yet in Tigré, news were brought to Coga from Woggora to Sanuda Tzef Leham * of Dembea, who could not accompany the king to Tigre on account of ſickneſs, but was left with the charge of the capital and palace during the king's abſence, that Melchizedec, one of the meaneſt and loweſt ſervants of the late king Melec Segued, had rebelled, and was collecting troops, conſiſting of ſoldiers, ſervants, and dependents of that prince, and had ſlain ſome of Socinios's ſervants. Sanuda was a brave and active officer; but, being without troops, (the king having carried the whole army to Tigre) immediately ſet out from Maitſha to the town of Tchelga, one of the frontiers

* Regiſter of the cattle; ſo the governor of Dembea is called.

frontiers of Abyſſinia, poſſeſſed by Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs.

It is here to be obſerved, that though the territorial right of Tchelga did then, and does ſtill appertain to the kingdom of Abyſſinia, yet the poſſeſſion of it is ceded by agreement to Wed Ageeb, under whoſe protection the caravans from Egypt and Sennaar, and thoſe from Abyſſinia to Sennaar and Egypt, were underſtood to be ever ſince they were cut off in the laſt century by the baſha of Suakem, for this purpoſe, that a cuſtomhouſe might be erected, and the duties divided between the two kingdoms equally. The ſame is the caſe with Serke, a town belonging to Sennaar, ceded for the ſame purpoſe to the king of Abyſſinia.

It happened that Abdelcader ‡, ſon of Ounſa late king of Sennaar, or of Funge, as he is called in the Abyſſinian annals, had been depoſed by his ſubjects in the 4th year of his reign, and remained at Tchlega under the mutual protection of Wed Ageeb and the emperor of Abyſſinia, a kind of priſoner to them both; and had brought with him a number of ſoldiers and dependents, the partakers of his former good fortune, who, finding ſafety and good uſage at Tchelga, were naturally well-affected to the king. Theſe, ready mounted and armed, joined Sanuda immediately upon his declaring the exigency; and with theſe he marched ſtraight to Coga, to the defence of the palace with which he had been intruſted.

Melchizedec,

‡ See the Hiſtory of the riſe of this monarchy in my return through Sennaar.

Melchizedec, whoſe deſign was againſt Coga, no ſooner heard Sanuda was arrived there than he marched to ſurpriſe him, and a very bloody and obſtinate engagement followed. The Funge, piqued in honour to render this ſervice to their protector, fought ſo obſtinately that they were all ſlain, and Sanuda, mounted that day upon a fleet horſe belonging to Socinios, eſcaped with difficulty, much wounded.

As ſoon as Socinios heard of this misfortune, he ſent Ras Emana Chriſtos, who marched ſtraight to Woggora, creating Zenobius, ſon of Imael, governor of that diſtrict; and there he found Zanuda Zenobius and Ligaba Za Denghel together, in a place called Deberaſſo.

As ſoon as the rebel Melchizedec heard Emana Chriſtos was come, and with him the fore-mentioned noblemen, he ſet himſelf to exert the utmoſt of his power to draw together forces of all kinds from every part he could get them, and his army was ſoon increaſed to ſuch a degree as, notwithſtanding the preſence of Emana Chriſtos, to ſtrike terror into all the territory and towns of Dembea. Nothing was wanted but a king of the royal race for whom to fight. Without a chief of this kind, it was evident that the army, however often ſucceſsful, would at laſt diſperſe. They, therefore, brought one Arzo, a prince of the royal blood, from his hiding-place in Begemder. Arzo, in return for a throne, conferred the place of Ras upon Melchizedec. Za Chriſtos, ſon of Hatzir Abib, was appointed to the command of the army under him; and, having finiſhed this and many ſuch neceſſary

ceſſary preparatives, they marched ſtraight to meet Emana Chriſtos, with a better countenance than rebel armies generally bear.

It was the 9th of March 1611, at 9 in the morning, when the two armies were firſt in ſight of each other, nor did they long delay coming to an engagement. The battle was very obſtinate and bloody; Melchizedec re-eſtabliſhed his character for worth, at leaſt as a ſoldier; the ſame did Za Chriſtos. Of the competitor Arzo, hiſtory makes no mention; his blood, probably, was too precious to riſk the ſpilling of it, being ſo far-fetched as from king Solomon. After a moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, part of Za Chriſtos's army was broken and put to flight; but it rallied ſo often, and ſold the ground it yielded ſo dear, that it gave time to Emana Chriſtos to come up to his army's aſſiſtance.

The Ras, who was as brave a ſoldier as he was a wiſe and prudent general, ſaw it was a time when all ſhould be riſked, and threw himſelf into the midſt of his enemies; and he was now arrived near the place where Melchizedec fought, when that rebel, ſeeing him advancing ſo faſt among his ſlaughtered followers, gueſſing his intention, declined the combat, turned his horſe and fled, while affairs even yet appeared in his favour. This panic of the general had the effect it ordinarily has in barbarous armies. Nobody conſidered how the proſpect of the general iſſue ſtood; they fled with Melchizedec, and loſt more men than would have ſecured them victory had they ſtood in their ranks.

A body

A body of troops, joined by ſome peaſants of Begemder, purſued Melchizedec ſo cloſely that they came up with him and took him priſoner, together with Tenſa Chriſtos, a very active partizan and enemy to Emana Chriſtos. Having brought them to the camp, before the Ras returned to Coga, they were tried and condemned to die for rebellion, as traitors, and the ſentence immediately executed, after which their heads were ſent to the king. Very ſoon after this, Arzo, and his general Za Chriſtos, were taken and ſent to the king, who ordered them to be tried by the judges in common form, and they underwent the ſame fate.

The king was employed in the winter ſeaſon while he reſided at Coga, in building a new church, called St. Gabriel. But the ſeaſon of taking the field being come, he marched out with his army and halted at Gogora, ſending Emana Chriſtos and Sela Chriſtos againſt the rebels; theſe were not in a particular clan, or province, for all the country was in rebellion, from the head of the Nile round, eaſtward, to the frontiers of Tigre. Part of them indeed were not in arms, but refuſed to pay their quota of the revenue; part of them were in arms, and would neither pay, nor admit a governor from the king among them; others willingly ſubmitted to Socinios, and were armed, only thereby to exempt themſelves from payment.

Sela Chriſtos fell upon the inhabitants of the mountainous diſtrict of Guſman, on the Nile, whoſe principal ſtrong-hold, Ouree Amba, he forced, killing many, and carrying away their children as ſlaves, which, upon the interceſſion of

Peter

Peter Paez, were given to the Jeſuits to be educated as Catholics.

The next attempt was upon the Gongas, a black Pagan nation, with which he had the ſame ſucceſs; the reſt were the Agows, a very numerous people, all confederates and in arms, and not willing to hear of any compoſition. The king ordered one of theſe tribes, the Zalabaſſa, to be extirpated as far as poſſible, and their country laid waſte. But notwithſtanding this example, which met with great interruption in the execution, the Agows continued in rebellion for ſeveral years afterwards, but much impoveriſhed and leſſened in number by variety of victories obtained over them.

The two next years were ſpent in unimportant ſkirmiſhes with the Agows of Damot, and with the Galla, invaders of Gojam. In 1615, the year after, Tecla Georgis made governor of Samen, and Welled Hawaryat, ſhum of Tſalemat *, were both ſent againſt a rebel who declared himſelf competitor for the crown. His name was Amdo. He pretended to be the late king Jacob ſon of Melec Segued; and this character he gave himſelf, without the ſmalleſt communication with the relations or connections of that prince. As ſoon as Aſſera Chriſtos and Tecla Garima, ſervants of Welled Hawaryat, heard of this adventurer, they ſurpriſed him in Tſalemat, and, putting him in irons, confined him in the houſe of Aſſera Chriſtos.

Gideon, king of the Jews, whoſe reſidence was on the high mountain of Samen, upon hearing that Amdo

* A low territory at the foot of Lamalmon.

Amdo was priſoner, ſent a body of armed men who ſurpriſed Aſſera Chriſtos in his own houſe in the night, and killed him, bringing with them his priſoner Amdo to Samen, and delivered him to Gideon there; who not only took him into protection, but aſſiſted him in raiſing an army by every means in his power. There were not wanting there idle vagabonds and lawleſs people enough, who fled to the ſtandard of a prince whoſe ſole view ſeemed to be murder, robbery, and all ſort of licentiouſneſs. It was not long till Amdo, by the aſſiſtance of Gideon, found himſelf at the head of an army, ſtrong enough to leave the mountain, and try his fortune in the plain below, where he laid waſte Shawada, Tſalemat, and all the countries about Samen which perſevered in their duty to the king.

Socinios, upon this, appointed Julius, his ſon-in-law governor of Woggora, Samen, Waag, and Abbergale, that is, of all the low countries from the borders of the Tacazze to Dembea. Abram, an old officer of the king, deſirous to ſtop the progreſs of the rebel, marched towards him, and offered him battle; but that brave officer had not the ſucceſs his intention deſerved, for he was defeated and ſlain; which had ſuch an effect upon Julius, that, without hazarding his fortune farther, he ſent to beſeech the king to march againſt Amdo with all poſſible expedition, as his affairs were become deſperate in that part of his dominions.

The king hereupon marched ſtraight to Woggora, and joined Julius at Shimbra-Zuggan; thence he deſcended from Samen, and encamped upon Tocur-

Ohha, (the black river) thence he proceeded to Debil, and then to Sobra; and from this laſt ſtation he ſent a detachment of his army to attack a ſtrong mountain called Meſſiraba, one of the natural fortreſſes of Gideon, which was forced by the king's troops after ſome reſiſtance, and the whole inhabitants, without diſtinction of age or ſex, put to the ſword, for ſuch were the orders of the king.

This firſt ſucceſs very much diſheartened the rebels, for Meſſiraba was, by nature, one of the ſtrongeſt mountains, and it, beſides, had been fortified by art, furniſhed with plenty of proviſions, and a number of good troops. The next mountain Socinios attacked was Hotchi, and the third Amba Za Hancaſſe, where he had the like ſucceſs, and treated the inhabitants in the ſame manner; thence he removed his army to Seganat, where he met with a very ſtout reſiſtance; but this mountain, too, was at laſt taken, Gideon himſelf eſcaping narrowly by the bravery of his principal general, who, fighting deſperately, was ſlain by a muſqueteer.

The conſtant ſucceſs of the king, and the bloody manner in which he purſued his victory, began to alarm Gideon, leſt the end ſhould be the extirpation of his whole nation. He, therefore, made an overture to the king, that, if he would pardon him and grant him peace, he would deliver the rebel Amdo bound into his hands.

The king aſſented to this, and Amdo was accordingly delivered up; and, being convicted of rebellion and murder, he was ſentenced to be nailed to a croſs, and to remain there till he died. But the terrible

terrible cries and groans which he made while they were fixing him to the croſs, ſo much ſhocked the ears of the king, that he ordered him to be taken down, and his head ſtruck off with an ax, which was executed in the midſt of the camp.

Socinios after this retired to Dancaz, and ordered Kefla governor of Gojam, and Jonael his maſter of the houſehold, to march ſuddenly and ſurpriſe Belaya, a country belonging to the Gongas and Guba, Pagan nations, on whom, every year, he made war for the ſake of taking ſlaves for the uſe of the palace. Theſe two officers, with a large body, moſtly horſe, fell unawares upon the ſavages at Belaya, ſlaying part, and bringing away their children. But not content with doing this, they likewiſe attacked the two diſtricts of Agows, Dengui and Sankara, then in peace with the king, and drove away an immenſe number of cattle, which the king no ſooner heard, than he ordered a ſtrict ſearch to be made, and the whole cattle belonging to the Agows to be gathered together, and reſtored to their reſpective owners; a piece of juſtice which ſoftened the hearts of this people more than all the ſeverities that had been hitherto uſed; and the good effects of which were ſoon after ſeen upon the Agows, though it produced ſomething very different in the conduct of Jonael.

The king this year, 1616, left his capital at the uſual time, in the month of November, and ordered his whole houſehold to attend him. His intention was againſt the Galla on the weſt of Gojam, eſpecially the tribe called Libo. But this campaign was rendered fruitleſs by the death of the king's eldeſt

ſon,

ſon, Kennaſſer Chriſtos, a young prince of great hopes, eſteemed both by the king and the people. He had an excellent underſtanding, and the moſt affable manners poſſible, to thoſe even whom he did not like; was very fond of the ſoldiers; merciful, generous, and liberal; and was thought to be the favourite of the king his father, who buried him with great pomp in the church of Debra Roma, built by king Iſaac, in the lake Tzana.

In the midſt of this mourning, there came a very bloody order * from the king. Hiſtory barely tells us the fact, but does not aſſign any other reaſon than the wanton manner in which Gideon king of the Jews had endeavoured to diſturb his reign and kingdom, which was thought a ſufficient excuſe for it. However this may be, the king gave orders to Kaſmati Julius, Kaſmati Welled Hawaryat, Billetana Gueta Jonael, and Fit-Auraris Hoſannah, to extirpate all the Falaſha that were in Foggora, Janſakara, and Bagenarwe, to the borders of Samen; alſo all that were in Bagla, and in all the diſtricts under their command, wherever they could find them; and very few of them eſcaped, excepting ſome who fled with Phineas.

In this maſſacre, which was a very general one, and executed very ſuddenly, fell Gideon king of that people; a man of great reputation, not only among his ſubjects, but throughout all Abyſſinia, reputed alſo immenſely rich. His treaſures, ſuppoſed to be concealed in the mountains, are the objects,

* It was probably part of the fruits of the new religion, and the work of his new religious adviſers.

objects of the ſearch of the Abyſſinians to this day.

The children of thoſe that were ſlain were ſold for ſlaves by the king; and all the Falaſha in Dembea, in the low countries immediately in the king's power, were ordered upon pain of death to renounce their religion, and be baptiſed. To this they conſented, ſeeing there was no remedy; and the king unwiſely imagined, that he had extinguiſhed, by one blow, the religion which was that of his country long before Chriſtianity, by the unwarrantable butchery of a number of people whom he had ſurpriſed living in ſecurity under the aſſurance of peace. Many of them were baptiſed accordingly, and they were all ordered to plow and harrow upon the ſabbath-day.

The king next ſent orders to Sela Chriſtos, and Kefla governor of Gojam, that, aſſembling their troops, they ſhould transfer the war into Bizamo, a province on the ſouth ſide of the Nile, called alſo in the books a kingdom. Through this lies the road of the merchants leading to Narea. It is inhabited by ſeveral clans of Pagans, which together make the great diviſion of theſe nations into Boren, and Bertuma Galla *.

The army paſſed the Nile, laying waſte the whole country, driving off the cattle, collecting the women and children as ſlaves, and putting all the men to the ſword; without theſe people, though they make conſtant inroads into Gojam, appearing any



* The words, Boren, and Bertuma Galla, have no meaning in the Ethiopic.

where in force to ſtop the deſolation of their country. The whole tract between Narea and the Nile was now cleared of enemies, and a number of prieſts at that time ſent to revive drooping Chriſtianity in thoſe parts.

In the year 1617, a league was again made among the Boren Galla, that part of them ſhould invade Gojam, while the others (namely the Marawa) ſhould enter Begemder. Upon hearing this the king in haſte marched to Begemder, that he might be ready in caſe of need to aſſiſt Tigre. He then fixed his head-quarters at Shima, but from this he ſpeedily removed; and, paſſing Emfras, came to Dobit, a favourite reſidence of the emperor Jacob, where he held a council to determine which of the two provinces he ſhould firſt aſſiſt.

It was the general opinion of his officers, that to march at that time of the year into Tigre, by Begemder was to deſtroy the army, and diſtreſs both provinces; that an army, well provided with horſe, was neceſſary for acting with ſucceſs againſt the Galla, and that in effect, though the royal army at preſent was ſo appointed, yet there was no graſs at that time of the year in all that march for the ſubſiſtence of the cavalry, and very little water for the uſe of man or beaſt, an inconvenience the Galla themſelves muſt experience if they attempted an invaſion that way. It was, moreover, urged, that, if the king ſhould march through Woggora and Lamalmon, they might get more food for their beaſts, and water too; but then they would throw themſelves far from the place where the Galla had entered, and would be obliged to fall into the former road, with the

the inconveniencies already ſtated. The conſequence of this deliberation was, that it was with very great regret the good of the commonweal obliged them to leave Tigre to the protection of Providence alone for a time, and haſten to meet the enemy that were then laying Gojam waſte.

With this view the king left Dobit, and came to the river Gomara in Foggora. He then paſſed the Nile near Dara, and came to Selalo, where he heard that the Djawi had paſſed the Nile from Bizamo, and entered Gojam at the oppoſite ſide to where he then was. He there left his baggage, and, by a forced march, advancing three days journey in one, he came to Bed, upon the river Sadi; but, inſtead of finding the enemy there, he received intelligence from Sela Chriſtos, that he had met the Galla immediately after their paſſing the Nile; had fought them, and cut their army to pieces, without allowing them time to ravage the country.

Upon this good news the king turned off on the road to Tchegal and Wainadaſſa, and ordered Bela Chriſtos to aſſemble as great an army as he could, and fall upon the Djawi and Galla in Walaka and Shoa, as alſo Ras Sela Chriſtos, to paſs the Nile and join him there.

That general loſt no time, but marched ſtraight to Amca Ohha, or the the river Amca, where he found the Edjow, who fled upon his coming, without giving him any opportunity of bringing them to an engagement, abandoning their wives, children, and ſubſtance, to the mercy of the enemy. Sela Chriſtos, having finiſhed this expedition as he intended, returned to join the king, whom he

found encamped upon the river Suqua, near Debra Werk, guarding thoſe provinces in the abſence of Sela Chriſtos. From this the king, retreating towards Dembea, paſſed the Nile near Dara, and encamped at Zinzenam, whence he marched round the lake into Dembea to his palace at Gorgora.

This village, whoſe name ſignifies *rain upon rain*, affords us a proof of what I have ſaid in ſpeaking of the cauſe of the overflowing of the Nile, in contradiction to the Adulitic inſcription, that no ſnow falls in Abyſſinia, or rather, that though ſnow may have fallen in the courſe of centuries, it is a phænomenon ſo rare as not to have a name or word to expreſs it in the whole language, and is entirely unknown to the people in general, at leaſt to the weſt of the Tecazze.

The Abyſſinian hiſtorian, from whom theſe memoirs are compoſed, ſays, "That this village, called Zinzenam, has its name from an extraordinary circumſtance that once happened in theſe parts, for a ſhower of rain fell, which was not properly of the nature of rain, as it did not run upon the ground, but remained very light, having ſcarce the weight of feathers, of a beautiful white colour like flour; it fell in ſhowers, and occaſioned a darkneſs in the air more than rain, and like to miſt. It covered the face of the whole country for ſeveral days, retaining its whiteneſs the whole time, then went away like dew, without leaving any ſmell or unwholeſome effect behind it."

This was certainly the accidental phænomenon of a day; for, notwithſtanding the height of the mountains Taranta and Lamalmon, ſnow never was ſeen there, at leaſt for ages paſt; and Laſta, in whoſe mountains

mountains armies have periſhed by cold, as far as a very particular inquiry could go, never yet had ſnow upon them; and Zinzenam is not in theſe mountains, or in any elevated ſituation. On the contrary, it is adjoining to the plain country of Foggora, near where it borders upon Begemder, not above 20 miles from the ſecond cataract, or 40 miles from Gondar; ſo that this muſt have been a ſhort and accidental change of the atmoſphere, of which there are examples of many different kinds, in the hiſtories of all countries.

As ſoon as the weather permitted, the king left his palace at Gorgora in the way to Tocuſſa, where he ſtaid ſeveral days; removed thence to Tenkel, where he continued alſo four days, and proceeded to Gunke, where he halted. From his head-quarters at Gunke, the king meditating an expedition againſt Atbara, ſent a meſſenger to Nile Wed Ageeb, prince of the Arabs, deſiring a meeting with him before he attacked the Funge, for ſo they call the ſubjects of the new monarchy, lately eſtabliſhed at Senaar by the conqueſt of the Arabs, under Wed Ageeb, a very conſiderable part of whoſe territory they had taken by force, and now enjoyed as their own poſſeſſions.

Abdelcader, ſon of Ounſa, was the ninth prince of the race of Funge then reigning; a weak, and ill-inclined man, but with whom Socinios had hitherto lived in friendſhip, and, in a late treaty, had ſent him as a preſent, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, richly ornamented with gold, with a gold chain to hang it by. Abdelcader, on his part, returned

turned to Socinios a trained falcon, of an excellent kind, very much eſteemed among the Arabs.

Soon after this, Abdelcader was depoſed by his brother Adelan, ſon of Ounſa, and fled to Tchelga, under protection of the king of Abyſſinia, who allowed him an honourable maintenance; a cuſtom always obſerved in ſuch caſes in the Eaſt, by princes towards their unfortunate neighbours.

Baady, ſon of Abdelcader, an active and violent young prince, although he depoſed his uncle Adelan, took this protection of his father in bad part. It was likewiſe ſuggeſted to him, that the preſent ſent by Socinios, a nagareet, or kettle-drum, imported, that Socinios conſidered him as his vaſſal, the drum being the ſign of inveſtiture ſent by the king to any one of his ſubjects whom he appoints to govern a province, and that the return of the falcon was likely to be conſidered as the acknowledgment of a vaſſal to his ſuperior. Baady, upon his acceſſion to the throne, was reſolved to rectify this too great reſpect ſhewn on the part of his father, by an affront he reſolved to offer. With this view, he ſent to Socinios two old, blind, and lame horſes.

Socinios took this amiſs, as it was intended he ſhould, and the ſlight was immediately followed by the troops of Atbara, under Nile Wed Ageeb, ſent by Baady to make an inroad into Abyſſinia, to lay waſte the country, and drive off the people, with orders to ſell them as ſlaves.

Among the moſt active in this expedition, were thoſe of the town of Serke. When Baady complained that his father and rival was protected in his

his own town of Tchelga, it had been anſwered, That true it was, Tchelga had been ceded and did belong to Sennaar, for every purpoſe of revenue, but that the ſovereignty of the place had never been alienated or ſurrendered to the king of Sennaar, but remained now, as ever, veſted in the king of Abyſſinia. Serke ſtood preciſely in the ſame ſituation with reſpect to Abyſſinia, as Tchelga did to Sennaar, when Socinios demanded ſatisfaction for the violence committed againſt him by his own town of Serke. The ſame anſwer was given him, That for all fiſcal purpoſes Serke was his, but owed him no allegiance; for, being part of the kingdom of Sennaar, it was bound to aſſiſt its ſovereign in all wars againſt his enemies.

Socinios, deeply engaged in the troubles that attended the beginning of his reign, paſſed over for a time both the affront and injury, but ſent into Atbara to Nile Wed Ageeb, propoſing a treaty with him independent of the king of Sennaar.

There were, at this time, three ſorts of people that inhabited the whole country from lat 13° (the mountains of Abyſſinia) to the tropic of Cancer (the frontiers of Egypt.) The firſt was the Funge, or negroes, eſtabliſhed in Atbara ſince the year 1504, by conqueſt. The ſecond, the old inhabitants of that country, known in very early ages by the name of *Shepherds*, which continues with them to this day; and theſe lived under a female government. The third, the Arabs, who came hither after the conqueſt of Egypt, in an army under Caled Ibn el Waalid, or Saif Ullah, *the Sword of God*, during the Khalifat of Omar, deſtined to ſubdue,

Nubia,

Nubia, and, ſtill later, in the time of Salidan and his brother.

Theſe Arabs had aſſociated with the firſt inhabitants, the Shepherds, from a ſimilarity of life and manners, and, by treaty, the Funge had eſtabliſhed a tribute to be paid them from both; after which, theſe were to enjoy their former habitations without further moleſtation.

This prince of the Arabs, Nile Wed Ageeb, embraced the offer of the king of Abyſſinia very readily; and a treaty was accordingly made between Socinios and him, and a territory in Abyſſinia granted him on the frontiers, to which he could retire in ſafety, as often as his affairs were embroiled with the ſtate of Sennaar.

It happened ſoon after this, that Alico a Mahometan governor of the Mazaga for Socinios, that is, of Nara and Ras el Feel, a low country, as the name imports, of black earth, revolted from his maſter, and fled to Sennaar, carrying with him a number of the king's horſes. Socinios made his complaint to the king of Sennaar, who took no notice of it, neither returned any anſwer, which exaſperated Socinios ſo much that it produced the preſent expedition, and was a cauſe of much bloodſhed, and of a war which, at leaſt in intentions, laſts to this day between the two kingdoms.

Wed Ageeb, upon Socinios's firſt ſummons, came to Gunke, his head-quarters, attended by a number of troops, and ſome of the beſt horſe in Atbara. Upon his entering the king's tent, he proſtrated himſelf, (as is the Abyſſinian cuſtom) acknowledged himſelf the king's vaſſal and brought preſents

preſents with him to a very conſiderable value. Socinios received him with great marks of diſtinction and kindneſs. He decorated him with a chain and bracelets of gold, and gave him a dagger of exquiſite workmanſhip, mounted with the ſame metal; clothed him in ſilk and damaſk after the Abyſſinian faſhion, and confirmed the ancient treaty with him. The fruit of all this was preſently ſeen; the king and his new ally fell ſuddenly upon Serke, put all the male inhabitants to the ſword, ſold the women and children as ſlaves, and burned the town to the ground. The ſame they did to every inhabited place on that ſide of the frontier, weſt to Fazuclo. After which, the king, having ſent a ſarcaſtic compliment to Baady, returned to Dancaz, taking Wed Ageeb with him.

Socinios had only ravaged the frontier of the kingdom of Sennaar to the weſtward, from Serke towards Fazuclo. This was but a part of the large ſcheme of vengeance he had reſolved to execute progreſſively from Serke, in reparation of the affront he had received from the king of the Funge. But he delegated what remained to the two princes his ſons, and to the governor of Tigre.

Welled Hawaryat, at the head of the Koccob horſe, and another body of cavalry reckoned equal in valour, called *Maia*, and the greateſt part of the king's houſehold troops, were ordered to fall upon that part of the frontier of Sennaar which the king had left from Serke eaſtward. Melca Chriſtos, with the horſe of Sire and Samen, was appointed to attack the frontier ſtill farther caſt, oppoſite to the province of Sire. Tecla Georgis, governor of

Tigre,

Tigre, was directed to lay waſte that part of the kingdom of Sennaar bordering upon the frontiers of his province.

The whole of this expedition ſucceeded to a wiſh; only Melca Chriſtos, in paſſing through the country of Shangalla, was met by a large army of that people, who, thinking the expedition intended againſt them, had attacked him in his paſſage, with ſome appearance of advantage; but by his own exertions, and thoſe of his troops alarmed at their prince's danger, he not only extricated himſelf from the bad ſituation he was in, but gave the Shangalla ſo entire an overthrow, that one of their tribes was nearly exterminated by that day's ſlaughter, and crowds of women and children ſent ſlaves to the king at Dancaz.

The delay that this occaſioned had no bad effect upon the expedition. The victorious troops poured immediately into Atbara under Melca Chriſtos, and completed the deſtruction made by Welled Hawaryat, and the governor of Tigre. All Sennaar was filled with people flying from the conquerors, and an immenſe number of cattle was driven away by the three armies. Baady ſeems to have been an idle ſpectator of this havock made in his kingdom; and the armies returned without loſs to Dancaz, loaded with plunder.

Still the vengeance of Socinios was not ſatisfied. The Baharnagaſh, Guebra Mariam, was commanded to march againſt Fatima queen of the Shepherds, called at that time Neguſta Errum, queen of the Greeks. This was a princeſs who governed the remnant of that ancient race of people, once

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the ſovereigns of the whole country, who, for ſeveral dynaſties, were maſters of Egypt, and who ſtill among their ancient cuſtoms, preſerved that known one, of always placing a woman upon the throne. Her reſidence was at Mendera*, on the N. E. of Atbara, one of the largeſt and moſt populous towns in it; a town, indeed, built like the reſt, of clay, ſtraw, and reeds, but not leſs populous or flouriſhing on that account. It was in the way of the caravans from Suakem, both to Abyſſinia and Sennaar, as alſo of thoſe large caravans to and from Sudan, the Negro country upon the Niger, which then came, and ſtill uſe that road in their way to Mecca. Its female ſovereign was conſidered as guardian of that communication, and the caravans paſſing it.

The Baharnagaſh had in orders from Socinios to purſue this queen till he had taken her priſoner, and to bring her in that condition into his preſence. The enterpriſe was by no means an eaſy one. Great part of the road was without water; but Guebra Mariam, the Baharnagaſh, was an active and prudent officer, and perfectly acquainted with the ſeveral parts of the country. With a ſmall, but veteran army, he marched down the Mareb, between that river and the mountains, deſtroying all the places through which he paſſed, putting the inhabitants unmercifully to the ſword, that no one might approach him, nor any report be made of his numbers, which were every where magnified by thoſe that eſcaped, and who computed them from the

* See the Map.

the greatneſs of the deſolation they had occaſioned.

On the 13th day he came before Mendera, and ſent a ſummons to the queen Fatima to ſurrender. Being told that ſhe had fled on his approach, he anſwered, That he cared not where ſhe was; but that, unleſs ſhe ſurrendered herſelf priſoner before he entered Mendera, he would firſt ſet the town on fire, and then quench the flames by the blood of its inhabitants.

Fatima, though old and infirm, was too great a lover of her people to riſk the fulfilling this threat from any conſideration of what might happen to her. She ſurrendered herſelf to Guebra Mariam, with two attendants; and he, without loſs of time, marched back to his own country, abſtaining from every ſort of violence or exceſs in his way, from reſpect to his female priſoner, whom he brought in triumph before Socinios to Dancaz, and was the firſt meſſenger of his own victory.

Socinios received this queen of the Greeks on his throne; but, in conſideration of her infirmities, diſpenſed with the ceremony of proſtration, conſtantly obſerved in Abyſſinia on being introduced to the preſence of the king: ſeeing that ſhe was unable to ſtand during the time of her interrogation, he ordered a low ſtool to be ſet for her on the ground; a piece of conſideration very rarely ſhewn to any ſtranger in Abyſſinia, however great their dignity and quality.

Socinios ſternly demanded of his priſoner, "Why ſhe and her predeceſſors, being vaſſals to the crown of Abyſſinia, had not only omitted the payment

payment of their tribute, but had not even ſent the cuſtomary preſents to him upon his acceſſion to the throne?"

To this the queen anſwered with great frankneſs and candour, "That it was true, ſuch tributes and preſents were due, and were alſo punctually paid from old times by her anceſtors to his, as long as protection was afforded them and their people, and this was the principal cauſe of paying that tribute; but the Abyſſinians having firſt ſuffered the country to be in great part conquered by the Arabs, and then again by the Funge, without ever interfering, ſhe had concluded a peace with the Funge of Sennaar, and paid the tribute to them, in conſequence of which they defended her from the Arabs: That ſhe had had no ſoldiers but ſuch as were employed in keeping a ſtrict watch over the road through the deſert to Suakem, which was anciently truſted to her; that the other part of her ſubjects was occupied in keeping and rearing great herds of cattle for the markets of Sennaar and other towns, as well as camels for the caravans of Mecca, Cairo, and Sudan, both employments being of public benefit; and, therefore, as ſhe did harm to none, ſhe had a greater reaſon to wonder what could be his motive of ſending ſo far from home to ſeek her, and her harmleſs ſubjects, in the deſert, with ſuch effuſion of innocent blood."

The king hearing this ſagacious anſwer, which was followed by many others of the kind, was extremely pleaſed; but aſſured her, "That he intended to maintain his ancient right both over her ſubjects, and the Arabs under Wed Ageeb, who was

now

now his vaſſal, in all the country from Fazuclo to Suakem; that he conſidered the Funge as uſurpers, and would certainly treat them as ſuch." After this Socinios diſmiſſed the queen, and gave her aſſurances of protection, having firſt cloathed her as his vaſſal in ſilk and damaſk, after the faſhion of women in her own country.

But it was not long before this train of ſucceſs met with a conſiderable check. Very ſoon afterwards the king being in Gojam, a meſſage was brought to him from the principal people of Narea, informing him plainly, "That Benero, having become cruel and avaricious, put many people to death wantonly, and many more for the ſake of their money; having taken from them their wives and daughters, either for his own pleaſure, or to ſell them as ſlaves to the Galla—they had at laſt murdered him, and choſen a man in his room diſtinguiſhed for his virtue and goodneſs."

The king was very much exaſperated at this meſſage. He told them, however bad Benero might have been, he conſidered his murder as an inſult done to himſelf, and had, therefore, diſpatched Muſtapha Baſha with ſome troops, and given command to all the Mahometans in Narea to aſſiſt him, and to inquire into the death of Benero, and the merit of his ſucceſſor.

At the ſame time, the Galla made an inroad into Begemder; and Welled Hawaryat, aſſembling what troops he could, in haſte, to ſtop the deſolation of that province, and having come in ſight of the enemy, he was forſaken by his army, and ſlain, together with the Cantiba of Dembea, Amdo, and Nile

Wed

Wed Ageeb prince of the Arabs, after fighting manfully for the king. Socinios, upon the arrival of this news, gave himſelf up to immoderate ſorrow; not ſo much for the loſs of his army which had miſbehaved, as for the death of Welled Hawaryat his favourite ſon, and Amdo and Nile, the two beſt officers in his army.

It will now be neceſſary that we look back a little to the ſtate of religious affairs in Abyſſinia, which began from this time to have influence in every meaſure, and greatly to promote the troubles of that empire; though they were by no means their only cauſe, as ſome have ſaid, with a view to throw greater odium upon the Jeſuits, who ſurely have enough to anſwer for, without inflaming the account by any exaggeration.

Paez, in the courſe of building the palace at Gorgora, had deſervedly aſtoniſhed the whole kingdom by a diſplay of his univerſal genius and capacity. If he was aſſiduous and diligent in raiſing this fabric, he had not neglected the advancing of another, the converſion of Abyſſinia to the obedience of the ſee of Rome.

Ras Sela Chriſtos (if we believe theſe miſſionaries) had converted himſelf, by reading with attention the Abyſſinian books only. Being about to depart from Gojam to fight againſt the Galla, he wanted very much to have made his renunciation and confeſſion in the preſence of Peter Paez. But, as he was buſied at Gorgora building a convent and palace there, he contented himſelf with another Jeſuit, Franciſco Antonio d'Angelis; and, being victorious in his expedition, he gave the fathers ground

ground and a ſum of money to build a monaſtery at Collela, which was now the third in Abyſſinia belonging to the Jeſuits.

As for the king, though probably already determined in his own mind, he had not taken any ſtep ſo deciſive as could induce the compliance of others. Diſputes were conſtantly maintained, for the moſt part in his preſence, between the miſſionaries and the Abyſſinian monks, chiefly concerning the long-agitated queſtion, the two natures in Chriſt, in which, although the victory declared always in favour of the Jeſuits, if we may credit their repreſentations, no conviction followed on the part of the adverſaries. At laſt Abuna Simon complained to the king, that unuſual and irregular things had been permitted without his knowledge; that diſputes upon articles of faith had been held without calling him, or his being permitted to give his clergy the advantage of his ſupport in theſe controverſies.

The king, who did not believe that the Abuna's eloquence or learning would make any great alteration, ordered the diſputations to be held a-new in the Abuna's preſence. That prieſt's ignorance made the matter worſe; and the king, holding this point as now ſettled, made his firſt public declaration, that there were two natures in Chriſt, perfect God and perfect man, really diſtinct between themſelves, but united in one divine perſon, which is the Chriſt.

At this time, letters came by way of India, both from the king of Spain, Philip II. dated in Madrid the 15th of March 1609, and from the pope Paul V. of

V. of the 4th of January 1611. Theſe letters contain nothing but general declamatory exhortations to Socinios to perſevere in the Chriſtian faith, aſſuring him of the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, inſtead of thoſe Portugueſe regiments which he had ſolicited. However, the affair of the converſion being altogether ſettled between the king and Paez, it was thought proper to make the renunciation firſt, and then depend upon the king of Spain and the pope for ſending the ſoldiers, if their prayers were not effectual.

It was neceſſary that Socinios ſhould write to the pope notifying his ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome. But letters on ſuch a ſubject were thought of too great conſequence to be ſent, as former diſpatches to Europe had been, without being accompanied by proper perſons, who, upon occaſion, might aſſume the character of ambaſſadors, and give any aſſurance or explanation needful.

It was at the ſame time conſidered, that the way by Maſuah was ſo liable to accidents, the intermediate province of Tigré being ſtill as it were in a ſtate of rebellion, that it would be eaſy for the enemies of the Catholic faith to intercept theſe meſſengers and letters by the way, ſo that their contents might be publiſhed amongſt the king's enemies in Abyſſinia, without ever being made known in Europe. Some propoſed the longer, but, as they apprehended, the more ſecure way, by paſſing Narea and the provinces ſouth of the frontiers of that kingdom, partly inhabited by Gentiles, partly by Mahometans, to Melinda, on the Indian Ocean, where they might embark for Goa.

Lots were caſt among the miſſionaries who of their number ſhould undertake this long and dangerous journey. The lot fell upon Antonio Fernandes, a man of great prudence, much eſteemed by the king, and by the general voice allowed to be the propereſt of all the ſociety for this undertaking. He, on his part, named Fecur Egzie (*beloved of the Lord*) as his companion, to be ambaſſador to the king of Spain and the pope. This man had been one of the firſt of the Abyſſinians converted to the Catholic faith by the Jeſuits, and he continued in it ſteadily to his death. He was a perſon of tried courage and prudence, and of a pleaſant and agreeable converſation.

It was the beginning of March 1613 Antonio Fernandes * ſet out for Gojam, where was Ras Sela Chriſtos. Fecur Egzie had ſet out before, that he might adjuſt his family affairs, and took with him ten Portugueſe, ſix of whom were to go no farther than Narea, and return, the other four to embark with him for India.

The governor detained the ſmall company till he procured guides from among the Shats and Gallas, barbarous nations near Narea, and eaſtward of it, from whom he took hoſtages for properly protecting this caravan in their way, paying them well, as an encouragement for behaving honeſtly and faithfully.

On the 15th of April they had ſet out from Umbarma, then the head-quarters of Sela Chriſtos, who gave

* See the provincial letters of the Jeſuits in Telle7, lib. iv. cap. 5.

gave them for guards forty men armed with ſhields and javelins. Nor was it long before their difficulties began. Travelling about two days to the weſt, they came to Senaſſé, the principal village or habitation of the Pagan Gongas, very recently in rebellion, and nearly deſtroyed, rather than ſubdued. To the firſt demand of ſafe-conduct, they anſwered in a manner which ſhewed that, far from defending the travellers from others, they were reſolved themſelves to fall upon them, and rob or murder them in the way. One Portugueſe offered himſelf to return with Fernandes to complain of theſe ſavages to Sela Chriſtos; who, upon their arrival, diſpatched three officers with troops to chaſtiſe theſe Pagans, and convey the ambaſſador and his attendants out of their territory and reach.

The Gongas, being informed that a complaint was ſent to Sela Chriſtos, which would infallibly be followed by a detachment of troops, gave the ambaſſador the ſafeguard he demanded, which carried him in three days to Minè *. This is the name of ſome miſerable villages, often rebuilt, and as often deſtroyed, upon a ford of the Nile, over which is the ordinary paſſage for the Mahometan merchants into Bizamo, the way to the mountainous country of Narea and Caffa. As the rains had begun to fall here with violence, when Fernandes and his companions arrived, they were obliged to paſs the river on ſkins blown full of wind.

The diſtance from Mine to Narea is 50 leagues due ſouth, with little inclination to weſt. The



* Which ſignifies the Paſſage.

road to it, and the places through which you pafs, are very diftinctly fet down in my map, and, I believe, without any material error; it is the only place where the reader can find this route, which, till now, has never been publifhed.

The next day our travellers entered the kingdom of Bizamo, inhabited by Pagan Galla. Thefe people came in crowds with arms in their hands, infifting upon being paid for liberty of paffing through their country; but, feeing the company of the ambaffador take to their arms likewife, they compounded for a few bricks of falt and coarfe cotton cloaths, and thereupon fuffered them to pafs. The fame day, the guide fent from Narea to conduct them by crooked and unfrequented paths out of the way of the Pagan Galla, made them to enter into a large thicket through which they could fcarcely force themfelves; after which they came to a river called *Maleg*, when it was nearly night. Next day they could find no ford where they could pafs. They now entertained a fufpicion, that the guard from Narea had betrayed them, and intended to leave them in thefe woods to meet their death from the Galla.

The day after, they found the ford, and paffed it without difficulty; and, being on the other fide, they began to be a little more compofed, as being far from the Pagans, and now near entering the territory of Narea. After afcending a high mountain, they came to Gonea, where they found a garrifon under one of the principal officers of that kingdom, who received them with great marks of honour and joy, on account of the warm recommendation

mendation Sela Chriſtos had given them, and perhaps as much for a conſiderable preſent they had brought along with them.

Narea, the ſouthmoſt province of the Abyſſinian empire, is ſtill governed by its native princes, who are called *the Beneros;* its territory reached formerly to Bizamo.

The Galla have quite ſurrounded them, eſpecially on the ſouth-eaſt and north. What is to the weſt is a part of Africa, the moſt unknown. The people of Narea have a ſmall trade with Melinda on the Indian Ocean, and with Angola on the weſtern, by means of intermediate nations. Narea is abundantly ſupplied with gold from the Negro country that is neareſt them. Some have, indeed, ſaid there is gold in Narea; but, after a very diligent inveſtigation, I find it comes chiefly from towards the Atlantic.

The kingdom of Narea ſtands like a fortified place in the middle of a plain. Many rivers, riſing in the fourth and fifth degrees of latitude, ſpread themſelves, for want of level, over this flat country and ſtagnate in very extenſive marſhes from ſouth by eaſt, to the point of north, or north-weſt.

The foot of the mountains, or edge of theſe marſhes neareſt Narea, is thick overgrown with coffee-trees, which, if not the *only* is the *largeſt* tree known there. Then comes the mountainous country of Narea Proper, which is interſperſed with ſmall, unwholeſome, but very fertile valleys. Immediately adjoining is the more mountainous country of Caffa, without any level ground whatever.

It

It is ſaid to be governed by a ſeparate prince: they were converted to Chriſtianity in the time of Melec Segued, ſome time after the converſion of Narea. The Galla, having ſettled themſelves in all the flat ground to the very edge of the marſhes, have, in great meaſure, cut off the communication with Abyſſinia for many years together; ſo that their continuance in the Chriſtian faith ſeems very precarious and uncertain, for want of books and prieſts to inſtruct them.

The Nareans of the high country are the lighteſt in colour of any people in Abyſſinia; but thoſe that live by the borders of the marſhes below are perfect blacks, and have the features and wool of Negroes: whereas all thoſe in the high country of Narea, and ſtill more ſo in the ſtupendous mountains of Caffa, are not ſo dark as Neapolitans or Sicilians. Indeed it is ſaid that ſnow has been ſeen to lie on the mountains of Caffa, as alſo in that high ridge called Dyre and Tegla; but this I do not believe. Hail has probably been ſeen to lie there; but I doubt much whether this can be ſaid of a ſubſtance of ſo looſe a texture as ſnow.

There is great abundance both of cattle, grain, and all ſorts of proviſions in Narea, as well in the high as in the low country. Gold, which they ſell by weight, is the medium of commerce within the country itſelf; but coarſe cotton cloths, ſtibium, beads, and incenſe, are the articles with which their foreign trade to Angola, and the kingdoms on the Atlantic, is carried on.

The Nareans are exceedingly brave. Though they have been conquered, and driven out of the

low

low country, it has been by multitudes—nation after nation pouring in upon them with a number of horſe to which they are perfect ſtrangers: But now, confined to the mountains, and ſurrounded by their marſhes and woods, they deſpiſe all further attempts of the Galla, and drive them from their frontiers whenever they approach too near.

In theſe ſkirmiſhes, or in ſmall robbing parties, thoſe Nareans are taken, whom the Mahometan merchants ſell at Gondar. At Conſtantinople, India, or Cairo, the women are more eſteemed as ſlaves than thoſe of any other part of the world, and the men are reckoned faithful, active, and intelligent. Both ſexes are remarkable for a cheerful, kind diſpoſition, and, if properly treated, ſoon attach themſelves inviolably to their maſters. The language of Narea and Caffa is peculiar to that country, and is not a dialect of any neighbouring nation.

Antonio Fernandes in this journey, ſeeking to go to India by Melinda in company with Fecur Egzie ambaſſador, paſſed through this country; but none of the Jeſuits ever went to Narea with a view of converting the people, at which I have been often ſurpriſed. There was enough of gold and ignorance to have allured them. That ſoftneſs and ſimplicity of manners for which the Nareans are remarkable, their affection for their maſters and ſuperiors, and firm attachment to them, would have been great advantages in the hands of the fathers. Every Abyſſinian would have encouraged them at the beginning of this miſſion; and, if once they had firmly eſtabliſhed themſelves in a country

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of ſo difficult acceſs, they might have bid defiance to prince Facilidas, and the perſecution that deſtroyed the progreſs of the Catholic faith in that reign.

From Gonea, in ſix days they came to the reſidence of Benero, the ſovereign of the country; ſince the conqueſt and converſion under Melec Segued, he is called Shum. The ambaſſador and Fernandes were received by the Benero with an air of conſtraint and coolneſs, though with civility. They found afterwards the cauſe of this was the inſinuation of a ſchiſmatic Abyſſinian monk, then at the court of that prince, who had told him that the errand of the ambaſſador and miſſionary to India was to bring Portugueſe troops that way into Abyſſinia, which would end in the deſtruction of Narea, if it did not begin with it.

Terrified at a danger ſo near, the Benero called a council, in which it was reſolved that the ambaſſador ſhould be turned from the direct road into the kingdom of Bali, to a much more inconvenient, longer, and dangerous one; and, the ambaſſador heſitating a little when this was propoſed, the Benero told him plainly, that he would not ſuffer him to paſs further by any other way than that of Bali.

Bali was once a province belonging to Abyſſinia, and was the firſt taken from them by the Galla. It is to the north-eaſt of Narea, to the weſt of the kingdom of Adel, which ſeparates it from the ſea; of which ample mention has been already made in the beginning of this hiſtory.

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This was to turn them to Cape Gardefan, the longeſt journey they could poſſibly make by land, and in the middle of their enemies; whereas the direction of the coaſt of the Indian Ocean running greatly to the weſtward, and towards Melinda, was the ſhorteſt journey they could make by land. Melinda, too, had many rich merchants, who, though Moors, did yet traffic in the Portugueſe ſettlements on the coaſt of Malabar, and had little intelligence or concern with the religious diſputes which raged in Abyſſinia.

However, I very much doubt whether this neareſt route could be accompliſhed, at leaſt by travellers, ſuch as Fecur Egzie, Fernandes, and their companions, all ignorant of the language, and, therefore, conſtantly at the diſcretion of interpreters, and the malice or private views of different people through whoſe hands they muſt have paſſed.

The Benero, having thus provided againſt the dangers with which his ſtate was threatened, if our travellers went by Melinda, made them a preſent of fifty cruſades of gold for the neceſſaries of their journey; and, as their way lay through the ſmall ſtate of Gingiro, and an ambaſſador from the ſovereign of that ſtate was then at Narea, he diſpatched that miniſter in great haſte, recommending the Portugueſe to his protection ſo long as they ſhould be in his territory.

Fecur Egzie and his company ſet out with the ambaſſador of Gingiro in a direction due eaſt; and the firſt day they arrived at a poſt of Narea, where was the officer who was to give them a guard to the frontiers; and who, after ſome delay, in order

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to ſee what he could extort from them, at laſt gave them a party of eighty ſoldiers to conduct them to the frontiers.

After four long days journey through countries totally laid waſte by the Galla, keeping ſcouts conſtantly before them to give advice of the firſt appearance of any enemy, that they might hide themſelves in thickets and buſhes; at mid-day they began to deſcend a very ſteep craggy ridge of mountains, when the ambaſſador of Gingiro, now their conductor, warned them, that, before they got to the foot of the mountain, they ſhould enter into a very thick wood to hide themſelves till night, that they might not be diſcovered by the Galla ſhepherds feeding their flocks in the plain below; for only at night, when they had retired, could thoſe plains be paſſed in ſafety.

At four o'clock in the afternoon they began to enter the wood, and were lucky in getting a violent ſhower of rain, which diſlodged the Galla ſooner than ordinary, and ſent them and their cattle home to their huts. But it was, at the ſame time, very diſagreeable to our travellers on account of its exceſſive coldneſs. Next day, in the evening, deſcending another very rugged chain of mountains, they came to the banks of the large river Zebee, as the Portugueſe call it; but its true name is Kibbee, a name given it by the Mahometan merchants, (the only travellers in this country) from its whiteneſs, approaching to the colour of melted butter, which that word ſignifies.

The river Zebee, or Kibbee, ſurrounds a great part of the kingdom of Gingiro. It has been miſ-

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taken for the river El Aice, which runs into Egypt in a courſe parallel to the Nile, but to the weſt of it.

Narea ſeems to be the higheſt land in the peninſula of Africa, ſo that here the rivers begin to run alternately towards the Cape of Good Hope and Mediterranean; but the deſcent at firſt is very ſmall on either ſide. In the adjoining latitudes, that is 4° on each ſide of the Line, it rains perpetually, ſo that theſe rivers, though not rapid, are yet kept continually full.

This of Zebee, is univerſally allowed by the merchants of this country to be the head of the river Quilimancy, which paſſing through ſuch a tract of land from Narea to near Melinda, muſt have opened a very conſiderable communication with the inland country.

This territory, called Zindero, or Gingiro, is a very ſmall one. The father and Fecur Egzie reſted the ſixth day from their ſetting out from Narea. The river Zebee, by the deſcription of Fernandes, ſeems to incline from its ſource in a greater angle than any river on the north of that partition. He ſays it carries more water with it than the Nile, and is infinitely more rapid, ſo that it would be abſolutely impaſſable in the ſeaſon of rains, were it not for large rocks which abound in its channel.

The paſſage was truly tremendous; trees were laid from the ſhore to the next immediate rock; from that rock to the next another tree was laid; then another that reached to the ſhore. Theſe trees were ſo elaſtic as to bend with the weight of a ſingle perſon. At a great diſtance below ran the foaming

foaming current of the river, ſo deep an abyſs that it turned the heads of thoſe who were paſſing on the moveable elaſtic ſupport or bridge above.

Yet upon this ſeeming inconvenience the exiſtence of that country depended. The Galla that ſurrounded it would have over-run it in a month, but for this river, always rapid and always full, whoſe ordinary communication by a bridge could be deſtroyed in a moment; and which, though it had one ford, yet this was uſeleſs, unleſs paſſengers had aſſiſtance from both ſides of the river, and conſequently could never be of ſervice to an enemy.

The terrible appearance of this tottering bridge for a time ſtopped the ambaſſador and miſſionary. They looked upon the paſſing upon theſe trembling beams as certainly incurring inevitable deſtruction. But the reflection of dangers that preſſed them behind overcame theſe fears, and they preferred the reſolution to run the riſk of being drowned in the river Zebee, rather than, by ſtaying on the other ſide all night, to ſtand the chance of being murdered by the Galla. But, after all the men only could paſs the bridge, they were obliged to leave the mules on the other ſide till the next morning, with inſtruction to their people, that, upon the firſt appearance of the Galla, they ſhould leave them, and make their beſt way over the bridge, throwing down one of the trees after them. The next morning, two peaſants, ſubjects of Gingiro, ſhewed them the ford, where their beaſts paſſed over with great difficulty and danger, but without loſs.

It was neceſſary now to acquaint the king of Gingiro of their arrival in his kingdom, and to beg

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to be honoured with an audience. But he happened at that time to be employed in the more important buſineſs of conjuration and witchcraft, without which this ſovereign does nothing.

This kingdom of Gingiro may be fixed upon as the firſt on this ſide of Africa where we meet with the ſtrange practice of divining from the apparition of ſpirits, and from a direct communication with the devil: A ſuperſtition this which likewiſe reaches down all along the weſtern ſide of this continent on the Atlantic Ocean, in the countries of Congo, Angola, and Benin. In ſpite of the firmeſt foundation in true philoſophy, a traveller, who decides from the information and inveſtigation of facts, will find it very difficult to treat theſe appearances as abſolute fiction, or as owing to a ſuperiority of cunning of one man in over-reaching another. For my own part, I confeſs I am equally at a loſs to aſſign reaſons for diſbelieving the fiction on which their pretenſions to ſome preternatural information are founded, as to account for them by the operation of ordinary cauſes. The king of Gingiro found eight days neceſſary before he could admit the ambaſſador and Fernandes into his preſence. On the ninth, they received a permiſſion to go to court, and they arrived there the ſame day.

When they came into the preſence of the king he was ſeated in a large gallery, open before, like what we call a balcony, which had ſteps from below on the outſide, by which he aſcended and deſcended at pleaſure. When the letter which the ambaſſador carried was intimated to him, he came down from the gallery to receive it, a piece of reſ-

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pect which he ſhewed to the king of Abyſſinia, though he was neither his ſubject nor vaſſal. He inquired much after the king's health, and ſtood a little by the ambaſſador and Fernandes, ſpeaking by an interpreter. Afterwards he again returned to his balcony, ſat down there, read his letter, and then correſponded with the ambaſſador by meſſages ſent from above to them below.

It is impoſſible to conceive from this, or any thing that Fernandes ſays, whether the language of Gingiro is peculiar to that country or not. The king of Gingiro read Socinios's letter, which was either in the Tigre or Arabic language. Fernandes underſtood the Arabic, and Fecur Egzie the Tigre and Amharic. It is not poſſible, then, to know what was the language of the king of Gingiro, who read and underſtood Socinios's letter, but ſpoke to Fecur Egzie by an interpreter.

At laſt the king of Gingiro told them, that all contained in the king of Abyſſinia's letter was, that he ſhould uſe them well, give them good guard and protection while they were in his country, and further them on their journey; which he ſaid he would execute with the greateſt pleaſure and punctuality.

The next day, as is uſual, the ambaſſador and miſſionary carried the king's preſent, chints, calicoe, and other manufactures of India, things that the king eſteemed moſt. In return to Fernandes he ſent a young girl, whom the father returned, it not being cuſtomary, as he ſaid, for a Chriſtian prieſt to have girls in his company. In exchange for the girl, the good-natured king of Gingiro ſent him a

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ſlave of the other ſex, and a beautiful mule. With all reſpect to the ſcruples of the father, I think it would have been fair to have kept the beautiful mule, and given the young female Gingerite to his companion in the journey, Fecur Egzie, who could have had no ſcruples.

Fernandes ſays he received the boy from the only view of ſaving his ſoul by baptiſm. I wonder, ſince Providence had thrown the girl firſt in his way, by what rule of charity it was he conſigned her ſoul to perdition by returning her, as he was not certain at the time that he might not have got a mule or camel in exchange for the girl; and then, upon his own principles, he certainly was author of the perdition of that ſoul which Providence ſeemed to have conducted by an extraordinary way to the enjoyment of all the advantages of Chriſtianity; ſurely the care of Neophytes of the female ſex was not a new charge to the Jeſuits in Abyſſinia.

It ſeems to be ridiculous for Fernandes to imagine that the ſovereign of this little ſtate called himſelf Gingiro, knowing that this word ſignified a monkey. His enemies might give him that name; but it is not likely he would adopt it himſelf. And the reaſon of that name is ſtill more ridiculous; for he ſays it is becauſe the gallery is like a monkey's cage. If that was the caſe, all the princes in Congo and Angola give their audiences in ſuch places. Indeed it ſeems to me that it is here the cuſtoms, uſed in theſe laſt-mentioned parts of Africa, begin, although Gingiro is nearer the coaſt of the Indian Ocean than that of the Atlantic. The colour of the

the people at Gingiro is nearly black, ſtill it is not the black of a negro; the features are ſmall and ſtraight as in Europe or Abyſſinia.

All matters in this ſtate are conducted by magic; and we may ſee to what point the human underſtanding is debaſed in the diſtance of a few leagues. Let no man ſay that ignorance is the cauſe, or heat of climate, which is the unintelligible obſervation generally made on theſe occaſions. For why ſhould heat of climate addict a people to magic more than cold? or, why ſhould ignorance enlarge a man's powers, ſo that, overleaping the bounds of common intelligence, it ſhould extend his faculty of converſing with a new ſet of beings in another world? The Ethiopians, who nearly ſurround Abyſſinia, are blacker than thoſe of Gingiro, their country hotter, and are, like them, an indigenous people that have been, from the beginning, in the ſame part where they now inhabit. Yet the former neither adore the devil, nor pretend to have a communication with him: they have no human ſacrifices, nor are there any traces of ſuch enormities having prevailed among them. A communication with the ſea has been always open, and the ſlave-trade prevalent from the earlieſt times; while the king of Gingiro, ſhut up in the heart of the continent, ſacrifices thoſe ſlaves to the devil which he has no opportunity to ſell to man. For at Gingiro begins that accurſed cuſtom of making the ſhedding of human blood a neceſſary part in all ſolemnities. How far to the ſouthward this reaches I do not know; but I look upon this to be the geographical

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bounds of the reign of the devil on the north ſide of the equator in the peninſula of Africa.

This kingdom is hereditary in one family, but does not deſcend in courſe to the eldeſt ſon, the election of the particular prince being not in the nobles; and thus far, indeed, it ſeems to reſemble that of their neighbours in Abyſſinia.

When the king of Gingiro dies, the body of the deceaſed is wrapped in a fine cloth, and a cow is killed. They then put the body ſo wrapped up into the cow's ſkin. As ſoon as this is over, all the princes of the royal family fly and hide themſelves in the buſhes; while others, intruſted with the election, enter into the thickets, beating every where about as if looking for game. At laſt a bird of prey, called in their country Liber, appears, and hovers over the perſon deſtined to be king, crying and making a great noiſe without quitting his ſtation. By this means the perſon deſtined to be elected is found, ſurrounded, as is reported, by tigers, lions, panthers, and ſuch like wild beaſts. This is imagined to be done by magic, or the devil, elſe there are every where enough of theſe beaſts lying in the cover to furniſh materials for ſuch a tale, without having recourſe to the power of magic to aſſemble them.

As they find their king, then, like a wild beaſt, ſo his behaviour continues the ſame after he is found. He flies upon them with great rage, reſiſting to the laſt, wounding and killing all he can reach without any conſideration, till, overcome by force, he is dragged to a throne, which he fills

in a manner perfectly correſponding to the rationality of the ceremonies of his inſtalment.

Although there are many that have a right to ſeek after this king, yet, when he is diſcovered, it does not follow, that the ſame perſon who finds him ſhould carry him to his coronation; for there is a family who have a right to diſpute this honour with the firſt poſſeſſor; and, therefore, in his way from the wood, they ſet upon the people in whoſe hands he is, and a battle enſues, where ſeveral are killed or wounded; and if theſe laſt, by force, can take him out of the hands of the firſt finder, they enjoy all the honours due to him that made him king.

Before he enters his palace two men are to be ſlain; one at the foot of the tree by which his houſe is chiefly ſupported; the other at the threſhold of his door, which is beſmeared with the blood of the victim. And, it is ſaid, (I have heard this often in Abyſſinia from people coming from that country) that the particular family, whoſe privilege it is to be ſlaughtered, ſo far from avoiding it, glory in the occaſion, and offer themſelves willingly to meet it.—To return to our travellers—

The father and the ambaſſador, leaving the kingdom of Gingiro, proceeded in a direction due eaſt, and entered the kingdom of Cambat, depending ſtill on the empire of Abyſſinia, and there halted at Sangara, which ſeems to be the principal place of the province, governed at that time by a Moor called *Amelmal*.

On the left of Cambat are the Guragués, who live in ſome beggarly villages, but moſtly in caves and

and holes in the mountains. The father was detained two days at Sangara, at the perſuaſion of the inhabitants there, who told him there was a fair in the neighbourhood, and people would paſs in numbers to accompany him, ſo that there would be no danger. But, after ſtaying that time at Sangara, he found that the intention of this delay was only to give time to ſome horſemen of the Guragués to aſſemble, in order to attack the caravan on the road, which they did ſoon after; and, though they were repulſed, yet it was with loſs of one of the company, a young man related to Socinios, who, being wounded with a poiſoned arrow, died ſome days after.

In the mean time, an Abyſſinian, called *Manquer*, overtook their caravan. As he was a ſchiſmatic, his intention was very well known to be that of diſappointing their journey; and he prevailed with Amelmal ſo far as to make him ſuſpect that the recommendations which the ambaſſador brought were falſe. He, therefore, inſiſted on the ambaſſador's ſtaying there till he ſhould get news from court. Amelmal, Manquer, and the ambaſſador, each diſpatched a meſſenger, who tarried three months on the road, and at laſt brought orders from the king to diſpatch them immediately.

As Amelmal now ſaw the bad inclination of Manquer, he detained him at Cambat that he might occaſion no more difficulties in their way. He gave the ambaſſador likewiſe ſeven horſes, which were ſaid to be the beſt preſents to the princes or governors that were in his road, and diſpatched

the travellers with another companion, Baharo, who had brought the letters from the king.

From Cambat they entered the ſmall territory of Alaba, independent of the king of Abyſſinia, whoſe governor was called *Aliko*, a Moor. This man, already prejudiced againſt the miſſionary and the ambaſſador, was ſtill heſitating whether to allow them to proceed, when Manquer, who fled from Amelmal, arrived. Aliko, hearing from this incendiary, that the father's errand was to bring Portugueſe that way from India to deſtroy the Mahometan faith, as in former times, burſt into ſuch violent rage as to threaten the father, and all with him, with death, which nothing but the reality of the king's letters, of which he had got aſſurance from Baharo, and ſome regard to the law of nations, on account of the ambaſſador Fecur Egzie, could have prevented. In the mean time, he put them all in cloſe priſon, where ſeveral of the Portugueſe died. At laſt, after a council held, in which Manquer gave his voice for putting them to death, a man of ſuperior character in that country adviſed the ſending them back to Amelmal, the way that they came; and this meaſure was accordingly adopted.

They returned, therefore, from Cambat, and thence to Gorgora, without any ſort of advantage to themſelves or to us, only what ariſes from that opportunity of rectifying the geography of the country through which they paſſed: and even for this they have furniſhed but very ſcanty materials, in compariſon of what we might reaſonably have expected,

expected, without having occaſioned any additional fatigue to themſelves.

We have already ſaid, that though Socinios had not openly declared his reſolution of embracing the Catholic faith, yet he had gone ſo far as to declare, upon the diſpute held between the Catholic and ſchiſmatic clergy, in his own preſence and that of the Abuna, that the Abyſſinian diſputants were vanquiſhed, and ought to have been convinced from the authority of their own books, eſpecially that of Haimanout Abou, the faith of the ancient fathers and doctors of their church received by them from the beginning as the undoubted rule of faith: That the doctrine of the Catholic church being only what was taught in the Haimanout Abou concerning the two natures in Chriſt, this point was to all intents and purpoſes ſettled; and, therefore, he ſignified it as his will, that, for the future, no one ſhould deny that there are two natures in Chriſt, diſtinct in themſelves, but divinely united in one perſon, which was Chriſt; declaring at the ſame time, that in caſe any perſon ſhould hereafter deny, or call this in doubt, he would chaſtiſe him for ſeven years.

The Abuna, on the contrary, ſupported by the half-brother of the king, Emana Chriſtos, (brother to Ras Sela Chriſtos) publiſhed a ſentence of excommunication, by affixing it to the door of one of the churches belonging to the palace, in which he declared all perſons accurſed who ſhould maintain two natures in Chriſt, or embrace or vindicate any of the errors of the church of Rome.

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The king had received various complaints of the Agows, who had abuſed his officers, and refuſed payment of tribute. He had ſet out upon an expedition againſt them, intending to winter in that country; but, hearing of the raſh conduct of the Abuna, and the leagues that were in conſequence every where forming againſt him, he returned to Gorgora, and ſent to the Abuna, that unleſs, without delay, he recalled the excommunication he had publiſhed, he ſhould be forthwith puniſhed with loſs of his head. This language was too clear and explicit to admit a doubt of its meaning; and the Abuna, giving way for the time, recalled his excommunication.

A conſpiracy was next formed by Emana Chriſtos, the eunuch Keſla Wahad maſter of the houſehold to the king, and Julius governor of Tigre, to murder Socinios in his palace; for which purpoſe they deſired an audience upon weighty affairs, which being granted by the king, the three conſpirators were admitted into his preſence.

It was concerted that Julius ſhould preſent a petition of ſuch a nature as probably to produce a refuſal; and, in the time of the altercation that would enſue, when the king might be off his guard, the other two were to ſtab him.

Juſt before the converſation began, he was adviſed of his danger by a page, and Julius preſenting his petition, the king granted it immediately, before Emana Chriſtos could come up to aſſiſt in the diſpute which they expected; and this conſpirator appearing in the inſtant, the king, who had got up to walk, invited them all three up to the terrace.

terrace. This was the moſt favourable opportunity they could have wiſhed. They, therefore, deferred aſſaulting him till they ſhould have got up the terrace: The king entered the door of the private ſtair, and drew it haſtily after him. It had a ſpring-lock made by Peter Paez, which was fixed in the inſide, and could not be opened from without, ſo that the king was left ſecure upon the terrace. Upon this the conſpirators, fearing themſelves diſcovered, retired, and from that time reſolved to keep out of the king's power.

At that period, Socinios had determined upon an expedition againſt the Funge, that is, againſt the blacks of Sennaar, who had entered his country in a violent manner, deſtroying his people, and carrying them off as ſlaves. It was, therefore, concerted, that while the king was buſied far off with the Funge, Emana Chriſtos, Julius, and the eunuch Kefla, at once ſhould attack Sela Chriſtos, at whom, next to the king, the conſpirators chiefly aimed; and the cauſe was, that the king had taken the poſts of Ras and the government of Gojam from Emana Chriſtos, who was a ſchiſmatic, and had given them to his younger brother, Sela Chriſtos, a violent Catholic.

Julius began by a proclamation in Woggora, in which he commanded, that thoſe who believed two natures in Chriſt ſhould immediately leave the province, and that all thoſe who were friends to the Alexandrian faith ſhould forthwith repair to him, and fight in defence of it. He then ordered the goods of all the Catholics in Tigre to be confiſcated, and ſtraightway marched to ſurpriſe Sela Chriſtos

Chriſtos then in Gojam. But the king received intelligence of his deſigns, and returned into Dembea before it was well known that he had left it. This, at firſt, very much diſconcerted Julius; and the rather, that Emana Chriſtos and Kefla Wahad kept aloof, nor had they declared themſelves openly yet, nor did they ſeem inclined to do it till Julius had firſt tried his fortune with the king.

This rebel, now full of preſumption, advanced with his army to where the Nile iſſues out of the great lake Tzana; and there he found the Abuna Simon, who had ſtaid for ſome weeks in one of the iſlands upon pretence of devotion. Simon, after having confirmed Julius in his reſolution of murdering the king, his father-in-law, or of dying in defence of the Alexandrian faith, if neceſſary, perſuaded him to lay aſide his deſign of marching againſt Sela Chriſtos, but rather immediately to return back and ſurpriſe the king before theſe two joined.

Julius readily adopted this advice of the Abuna; while that prieſt, to ſhew he was ſincere, offered to accompany him in perſon, and ſhare his fortune. This was accepted with pleaſure by Julius, who next morning received the Abuna's benediction at the head of his army, and aſſiſted at a ſolemn excommunication pronounced againſt the king, Sela Chriſtos, the fathers, and all the Catholics at court.

The king's firſt thought, upon hearing theſe proceedings, was to ſend ſome troops to the aſſiſtance of Sela Chriſtos, warning him of his danger; but, upon hearing meaſures were changed, and that the

firſt

firſt deſign was againſt himſelf, he marched to meet Julius, and ſent a meſſage to Sela Chriſtos to join him with all poſſible ſpeed; and, as he was an excellent general he took his poſt ſo judiciouſly that he could not be forced to fight againſt his will till ſuccour was brought him, without great diſadvantage to the enemy.

Julius, fearing the junction of Sela Chriſtos, endeavoured to fight the two armies ſeparately. For which purpoſe he advanced and pitched his camp cloſe within ſight of that of Socinios, reſolving to force him to an engagement. This was thought a very dangerous meaſure, and was contrary to the advice of all his friends, who ſaw how judiciouſly Socinios had choſen his ground; and it was known to the meaneſt ſoldier on both ſides, how conſummate the king was in the art of war.

But the Abuna having perſuaded him, that, as ſoon as the ſoldiers ſhould ſee him, they would abandon the king and join his colours, early in the morning he put on his coat of mail, and, mounted on a ſtrong and fiery horſe, was proceeding to the king's camp, when Malacotawit, his wife, (daughter to Socinios) perſuaded him at leaſt to take ſome food to enable him to bear the fatigues of the day. But diſdaining ſuch advice, he only anſwered furiouſly, "That he had ſworn not to taſte meat till he had brought her her father's head;" and, without longer waiting for the reſt of his troops, he leaped over the enemy's lines in a quarter where the Abuna had promiſed he ſhould be well received.

Indeed, on his firſt appearance, no one there oppoſed his paſſage, but ſeemed rather inclined to favour

vour him as the Abuna had promiſed: And he had now advanced near to a body of Tigre ſoldiers that were the guard of the king's tent, loudly crying, "Where is your emperor?" when one of theſe with a ſtone ſtruck him ſo rudely upon the forehead that it felled him to the ground; and, being now known, another ſoldier (called Amda) thruſt him through with a ſword, and thereafter killed him with many wounds. His head was cut off and carried to Socinios.

The few that attended him periſhed likewiſe among the ſoldiers. Nor did any of Julius's army think of a battle, but all ſought their ſafety by a flight. The king's troops being all freſh, purſued the ſcattered rebels with great vigour, and many were ſlain, without any loſs on the part of the royaliſts.

The Abuna Simon had, for a conſiderable time, ſtood as an eccleſiaſtic, unhurt and unheeded, among the flying troops. Being at laſt diſtinguiſhed by his violent vociferation, and repeated imprecations upon the king and the conquerors, he was ſlain by a common ſoldier, who cut his head off and carried it to Socinios, who ordered it, with the body, to be taken from the field of battle and buried in a church-yard.

Socinios gave the ſpoil of the camp to his ſoldiers. It was ſaid, that no time, ſince the Turks were defeated under Mahomet Gragne, was there ever ſo much treaſure found in a camp. The pride of Julius induced him to carry all his riches with him. They were the fruits of avarice and oppreſſion in all the principal poſts of the empire, and which in their turn he had enjoyed. They were likewiſe the

ſpoils

ſpoils of the Catholics, newly acquired by the confiſcations made ſince his rebellion. A great number of cattle was likewiſe taken, which the king diſtributed among the prieſts of the ſeveral churches, the judges, and other lay-officers. Very great rejoicings were made everywhere, in the midſt of which arrived Ras Sela Chriſtos with his army from Gojam, and was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment on ſeeing the ſmall number of troops with which the king had been expoſed to fight Julius, and how complete a victory he had gained with them.

In the mean time, Emana Chriſtos had retired to a high mountain in Gojam, called *Melca Amba*, where he continued to excite the people of that province to rebel and join Julius, whoſe arrival he daily expected, that, together, they might fight Sela Chriſtos. But the raſhneſs of Julius, and the march of Sela Chriſtos to the king's aſſiſtance, had very much diſconcerted their whole ſcheme.

Af Chriſtos, who commanded in Gojam after the departure of Ras Sela Chriſtos, ſent to Melca Amba, "reproaching Emana Chriſtos with ſeditious practices; upbraiding him with the unnatural part he had acted, being a brother-german to Sela Chriſtos, and brother to Socinios by the ſame mother, while Julius was married to his daughter, and had conſtantly enjoyed the great places of the empire. He aſked him, What they could be more? Kings they could not be, neither he nor Julius. Ras, the next place in the empire, they both had enjoyed; and, if the king had taken that office lately from Emana Chriſtos, he had not given it to a ſtranger, but to his brother Sela Chriſtos, who, it was but fair, ſhould have his turn; and that the importance of his

his family was not the leſs increaſed by it. Laſtly, he repreſented the danger he ran, if Julius made his peace, of falling a ſacrifice as the adviſer of rebellion."

Emana Chriſtos anſwered, "That though he rebelled with Julius, and at the ſame time, yet it was not as a follower of Julius, nor againſt the king; but that he took up arms in defence of the ancient faith of his country, which was now, without reaſon, trodden under foot in favour of a religion, which was a falſe one if they underſtood it, and an uſeleſs one if they did not. He ſaid he was ſatisfied of his own danger; but neither his connection with the king, nor his being related to Sela Chriſtos, could weigh with him againſt his duty to God and his country. The king and his brother might be right in embracing the Romiſh religion, becauſe they were convinced of the truth of it: he had uſed, however, the ſame means, and the ſame application, had heard the arguments of the ſame fathers, which, unluckily for him, had convinced him their religion was not a true, but a falſe one. For the ſame reaſons he continued to be an Alexandrian, which his brother alleged had made him a Roman. He, therefore, begged Af Chriſtos to conſider, by a review of things ſince David III.'s time, how much blood the change would coſt to the kingdom by the attempt, whether it ſucceeded or not; and whether, after that conſideration, it was worth trying the experiment."

This artful and ſenſible meſſage, ſent by a man of the capacity and experience of Emana Chriſtos, eaſily convinced Af Chriſtos that it was not by argument

gument Emana Chriſtos was to be brought to his duty; but, like a good officer, he kept up correſpondence with him, that he might be maſter of the intelligence to what place he retired.

Soon after Sela Chriſtos had left Gojam to join the king, by forced marches he ſurrounded Melca Amba, where Emana Chriſtos was, and had aſſembled a number of troops to deſcend into the plain and create a diverſion in favour of Julius. The mountain had neither water in it nor food for ſuch a number of men, nor had Emana Chriſtos forces enough to riſk a battle with an officer of the known experience of Af Chriſtos, who had choſen the ground at his full leiſure, and with complete knowledge.

Three days the army within the mountain held out without complaining; but, in the evening of the third day, ſome monks and hermits (*holy men*, the abettors of this rebellion) came to Af Chriſtos to remonſtrate, that there were ſeveral convents and villages in the mountain, alſo ſmall ſprings, and barley enough to anſwer the neceſſities of the ordinary inhabitants, but were not enough for ſuch an additional number which had taken forcible poſſeſſion of the wells, and drank up all the water, to the immediate danger of the whole inhabitants periſhing with thirſt.

To this Af Chriſtos anſwered, That the reducing the mountain, and the taking Emana Chriſtos, was what was given him in commiſſion by the king, to attain which end he would carefully improve all the means in his power. He was ſorry, indeed, for the diſtreſs of the convents in the mountain, but could

could not help it; nor would he ſuffer one of them to remove or come down into the plain, nor would he diſcontinue blockading the mountain while Emana Chriſtos was there and alive. No other alternative, therefore, remained but the delivering up Emana Chriſtos. His army would have fought for him againſt a common enemy, but againſt thirſt their ſhields and ſwords were uſeleſs.

Af Chriſtos, with his priſoner, forthwith proceeded to join the king, and paſſed the Nile into Begemder. At croſſing the river Baſhilo, they were informed of the defeat and death of Julius and the Abuna. The meſſenger had alſo letters for Emana Chriſtos, whom the king did not know to be yet priſoner: among theſe was one from Sela Chriſtos, in which he upbraided his brother with his unnatural treaſon, and aſſured him ſpeedily of a fate like that of Julius. Emana Chriſtos received this intelligence almoſt dead with fear, for never was a prophecy made which ſeemed to have needed leſs time to accompliſh than this of his brother's.

Af Chriſtos ſurrendered his priſoner to the king at Dancaz, who immediately aſſembled a full convocation of judges of all degrees; and the priſoner being ordered to anſwer to his charge concerning the rebellion of Julius and his conſpiracy againſt the king's life, he took the part he had been adviſed, and palliated the whole of his actions, without poſitively denying any one of them, and ſubmitted to the king's mercy. The judges, conſidering the defence, unanimouſly found him guilty of death, but the king, whoſe laſt vote, when ſitting in judgment,

ment, ſuperſedes and overturns all the reſt, reprieved, and ſent him priſoner to Amhara.

Hitherto the king had contented himſelf with fixing two points in favour of the Roman church, in contradiſtinction to that of Alexandria. The firſt denounced puniſhment to every one who did not believe that there are two natures in Chriſt, and that he is perfect God and perfect man, without confuſion of perſons. The ſecond was rather a point of diſcipline than of faith; yet it was urged as ſuch, by declaring it to be unlawful to obſerve Saturday, the ancient Jewiſh ſabbath. The firſt of theſe, if it was not the cauſe, had been aſſumed as the pretext for the rebellion of Julius. The ſecond produced that of Jonael governor of Begemder, of which we are now to ſpeak. But thus far only the king had gone. He had not openly joined the church of Rome, nor as yet renounced that of Alexandria, nor forced any one elſe to do ſo.

The firſt prelude to Jonael's rebellion was an anonymous letter written to the king, in which all the ſtale and lame arguments of the Alexandrians were raked together, and ſtated with a degree of preſumption worthy of the ignorance and obſtinacy of thoſe from whom they came. This, though ridiculous, and below notice in point of argument, offended greatly both the king and the Jeſuits, by the aſperity of its terms, and the perſonal applications contained in it. The king was treated as another Dioclefian, thirſting after Chriſtian blood, and for this devoted to hell; as were alſo the Jeſuits, whom they called relations of Pilate, in alluſion to their origin from Rome.

The

The king, grievouſly offended, added this injunction to the former proclamation, "That all outdoor work, ſuch as plowing and ſowing, ſhould be publicly followed by the huſbandman on the Saturday, under penalty of paying a web of cotton cloth, for the firſt omiſſion, which cloth was to be of five ſhillings value; and the ſecond offence was to be puniſhed by a confiſcation of moveables, and the crime not to be pardoned for ſeven years;" —the greateſt puniſhment for miſdemeanors in Abyſſinia. To this Socinios added, *viva voce*, from his throne, "that he never *aboliſhed*, but *explained* and eſtabliſhed their religion, which always taught, as their own books could teſtify, that Chriſt was perfect God and perfect man, two diſtinct natures united in one hypoſtaſis of the eternal word; neither was it in compliance with the Jeſuits that he abrogated the obſervation of the Jewiſh ſabbath, but in obedience to the council of Chalcedon, which was founded in the holy ſcriptures, for which he was ready at all times to loſe his life, though he ſhould endeavour firſt to inflict that puniſhment on ſuch as were its enemies."

In order to ſhew that he did not mean to trifle, he ordered the tongue of a monk (called Abba Af Chriſtos) to be cut out, for denying the two natures in Chriſt; and Buco, one of the principal generals of his court (who afterwards died a zealous Catholic) he ordered to be beaten with rods, and degraded from his employment, for obſerving the Jewiſh ſabbath.

The king, having given theſe public, unequivocal teſtimonies of his reſolution, put himſelf at the head

head of his army, and marched againſt Jonael; but that rebel, not daring to meet his offended ſovereign, retired into the mountains; whereupon the king laid waſte the country of the Galla, who had protected him. This occaſioned a diviſion among the Galla themſelves. One party declaring for the king, apprehended Jonael with intention to deliver him up; but he was ſoon reſcued out of their hands by the contrary party, enemies to Socinios. His protectors being once known, the manner of working his deſtruction was ſoon known likewiſe. The king's preſents made their way to that faithleſs people, the only barbarians with whom the right of hoſpitality is not eſtabliſhed. Upon receiving the king's bribe, they murdered Jonael, cut his head off, and ſent it to the king.

The rebellion in Damot was not ſo eaſily quelled. Sela Chriſtos, a zealous Catholic, was ſent againſt the rebels to inforce the proclamation with regard to the ſabbath. But as his connections were very conſiderable among them, he choſe firſt to endeavour, by fair means, to induce the ignorant ſavages to return to reaſon and obedience. With this view, he ſent to expoſtulate with them; and to beg that, in articles of faith, they would ſuffer themſelves to be examined and inſtructed by men of learning and good life; not by thoſe monks, ignorant like themſelves, from whom they only could learn vice, blaſphemy, and rebellion. To this the Damots anſwered, as one man, That, if his friendſhip for them and good intentions were real, he ſhould give them, for proof, the immediate burning of all the Latin books which had been tranſlated into the

Ethiopian language, and that, then he ſhould hang thoſe Jeſuits who were with him upon a high tree.

We are not, however, to conſider this was really from a conviction or perſuaſion of the Damots, who inhabit a province bordering upon the Agows and Gongas, and their chriſtianity much upon a par with that of either of theſe nations. But the fact was, that the fanatics and zealots for the Alexandrian faith had retired in great numbers to Damot, as to a province the worſt affected to the king, from the recent violence of Julius, who, in an expedition againſt the Shangalla, by order of the king had driven off the cattle of the peaceable Damots, who had been then guilty of no offence. And as theſe were ready to rebel for a quarrel merely their own, it was very eaſy for the ſchiſmatical monks to add this religious grievance to the ſum of the preceding.

Sela Chriſtos had with him about 7000 men, moſt of them Catholics and veteran ſoldiers; and among theſe 40 Portugueſe, partly on foot, armed with muſquets, the others on horſeback, clad in coats of mail. Very different was the army of Damots. They were ſuperior in number, for they exceeded 12000 men, and among theſe were 400 monks, well armed with ſwords, lances, and ſhields, earneſtly bent upon the obtaining a crown of martyrdom in defence of their religion, from the innovation propoſed by Socinios. At the head of theſe was a fanatical monk (one Batacu) who promiſed them armies of angels, with flaming ſwords, who ſhould ſlay their enemies, but render them invulnerable,

nerable, as he declared himſelf to be, either by ſword or lance.

The battle was fought at the foot of the mountains of Amid Amid, on the 6th of October 1620, Sela Chriſtos, ſure of victory, and unwilling to ſlaughter a people he had been uſed to protect, began firſt to ſhew his ſuperiority in ſlight ſkirmiſhes. After which, deſiring a parley, he ſent meſſengers to them, begging them to conſider their own danger, and offering them a general amneſty upon their ſubmiſſion. Theſe meſſengers were not allowed to approach, for the ſhowers of arrows that were poured upon them; ſo the battle began with great animoſity on both ſides. The Damots were ſoon broken and put to flight by the ſuperiority of Sela Chriſtos's ſoldiers. But the 400 monks, already mentioned, fought moſt deſperately in defiance of numbers, nor did they ſeek their ſafety by a flight. One hundred and eighty of them were killed on the place they occupied, valiantly fighting to the very laſt. A rare example, and ſeldom found in hiſtory, that fanatics like theſe, always ready to rebel, ſhould perſiſt and ſacrifice their lives to the follies of their own preaching.

As for their celeſtial auxiliaries, whoſe aſſiſtance they were promiſed as far as could be diſcovered, they neither did harm nor good. We may ſuppoſe they ſtood neuter. But Batacu the hermit, ringleader of this ſedition, whoſe body was ſo miraculouſly armed, that neither ſword nor ſpear could make any impreſſion upon it, was unfortunately thruſt through with a lance in the very beginning

of the engagement, which greatly ſerved to diſcredit theſe ſupernatural aids.

It was in this year 1620, that Socinios marched into Begemder againſt Jonael. At which time Peter Paez was employed at Gorgora in building the church there. The king returned immediately to Dancaz after the defeat of Jonael, and paſſed his winter at that place.

It was on the 16th of January 1621, that the dedication of the church of Gorgora was made by Peter Paez; and at that time the king was in Begemder. Upon his return to Dancaz he met Paez at Gorgora for the firſt time. He remained at Gongora till the 3d of October of that year, when the news of the defeat of the Damots by Sela Chriſtos arrived, which he received in preſence of that prieſt at Gongora. In this, both the Jeſuits and Abyſſinian annals agree. It is not then poſſible that Peter Paez could have been with the king at Sacala, or Geeſh, in the country of the Agows on the 21ſt of March 1621*; for both Peter Paez and Socinios were at that time in Gorgora.

At this time the Ethiopic memoirs of Socinios's reign interrupted their continual topics of rebellion and bloodſhed, to record a very trifling anecdote; which, however, I inſert, as it ſerves to give ſome idea of the ſimplicity and ignorance of thoſe times.

The hiſtorian ſays, that this year there was brought into Abyſſinia, a bird called *Para*, which was about the bigneſs of a hen, and ſpoke all languages; Indian, Portugueſe, and Arabic. It named the

* This will be more enlarged upon hereafter.

the king's name: although its voice was that of a man, it could likewiſe neigh like a horſe, and mew like a cat, but did not ſing like a bird. It was produced before the aſſembly of judges, of the prieſts, and the azages of court, and there it ſpoke with great gravity. The aſſembly, after conſidering circumſtances well, were unanimouſly of opinion, that the evil ſpirit had no part in endowing it with theſe talents. But to be certain of this, it was thought moſt prudent to take the advice of Ras Sela Chriſtos, then in Gojam, who might, if he thought fit, conſult the ſuperior of Mahebar Selaſſé; to them it was ſent, but it died on the road. The hiſtorian cloſes his narrative by this wiſe reflection on the parrot's death; "Such is the lot of "all fleſh."

The king, immediately after his victory over Jonael, had reſolved to throw off the maſk, and openly to profeſs the Catholic religion. The ſucceſs of Sela Chriſtos againſt the Damots had confirmed him. He had paſſed the rainy ſeaſon, as I have before obſerved, between Gorgora and Dancaz; and, in the uſual time, in the month of November, marched to Foggora, a narrow ſtripe of plain country, reaching from Emfras to Dara, bounded on one ſide by the lake Dembea, and on the other by the mountains of Begemder.

For this purpoſe he ſent to Peter Paez, his ordinary confeſſor, to come to him; and, having told him his reſolution, he declared, that, in proof of the ſincerity of his converſion, he had put away all his wives (of whom he had ſeveral of the firſt quality, and many children by them) and retained only

only his firſt, by whom he had the eldeſt of his ſons, deſtined to ſucceed him in the empire.

Paez, having received his confeſſion, and public renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, returned to Gorgora ſinging his *nunc dimittis*, as if the great end of his miſſion was now completed; nor was he deceived in his prognoſtication. For, having too much heated himſelf with zeal in travelling, he was, upon his arrival, taken with a violent fever; and, tho' every ſort of remedy was adminiſtered to him by Antonio Fernandes, yet he died on the third of May 1623, with great demonſtrations of piety and reſignation, and firm conviction, that he had done his duty in an active, innocent, and well-ſpent life.

He had been ſeven years a captive in Arabia in the hands of the Moors, and nineteen years miſſionary in Abyſſinia, in the worſt of times, and had always extricated himſelf from the moſt perilous ſituations, with honour to himſelf and advantage to his religion. In perſon, he was very tall and ſtrong; but lean from continual labour and abſtinence. He was red faced; which, Tellez ſays, proceeded from the religious *warmth* of his heart. He had a very good underſtanding, which he had cultivated, every hour of his life, by ſtudy or practice.

Beſides poſſeſſing univerſal knowledge in ſcholaſtic divinity, and the books belonging to his profeſſion, he underſtood Greek, Latin, and Arabic well, was a good mathematician, an excellent mechanic, wrought always with his own hands, and in building was at once a careful, active labourer,

er, and an architect of refined taste and judgment. He was, by his own study and industry, painter, mason, carver, carpenter, smith, farrier, quarrier, and was able to build convents and palaces, and furnish them without calling one workman to his assistance; and in this manner he is said to have furnished the convent at Collela, as also the palace and convent at Gorgora.

With all these accomplishments, he was so affable, compassionate, and humble in his nature, that he never had opportunity of conversing, even with heretics, without leaving them his friends. He was remarkably cheerful in his temper; and the most forward always in promoting innocent mirth, of that puerile species which we in England call *fun*, in great request among the young men in Abyssinia, who spend much of their time in this sort of conversation, whether in the city or the camp. Above all, he was a patient, diligent instructor of youth; and the greatest part of his disciples died in the persecution that soon followed, resolutely maintaining the truths of that religion their preceptor first had taught them. In a word, he was the hinge upon which the Catholic religion turned. He had found the seeds of it sown in the country for a hundred years before his time, which had borne little fruit, and was then apparently on the decline. Nineteen years of this most active missionary, and the death of three kings, had advanced it only so far as to be embraced publicly by one of them; after Paez's death, in six years it fell, though supported most strenuously by a king prodigal of the blood of his subjects in this cause, by a patriarch

sent

ſent from Rome, and by above 20 very zealous and active miſſionaries; and, as far as my foreſight can carry me, it is ſo entirely fallen, that, unleſs by a ſpecial miracle of Providence wrought for that purpoſe, it never will riſe again.

The king's renunciation of the Alexandrian faith was followed by a very ſtrong, or rather violent manifeſto, and we need not be at a loſs to gueſs whom he employed to draw it up. It begins by aſſerting the ſupremacy of the church of Rome, as the ſee of St. Peter; it mentions the three firſt general councils, which condemned Arius, Macedonius, and Neſtorius; next quotes the council of Chalcedon, as the fourth general council, as having juſtly condemned Dioſcurus; but ſays not a word of the council of Epheſus, which the Abyſſinians receive inſtead of that of Chalcedon; inſiſts largely upon the two natures in Chriſt; then, leaving the patriarchs of Alexandria, it attacks not the doctrine, but the morals of the Abunas, ſent from Alexandria into Abyſſinia, accuſes the eccleſiaſtics in general of ſimony and paying money to the Abuna for their ordination, (a well-founded part of the charge) which I fear continues to this day.

The Abuna Marcus was, it is there ſaid, convicted by Socinios, or Melec Segued, of a crime of ſuch turpitude that the name of it ſhould never ſtain paper. He was degraded and baniſhed to the iſland of Dek. His ſucceſſor Chriſtodulus had many concubines. Abuna Petros, who ſucceeded, took the wife of a poor Egyptian, and lived with her; he then excommunicated his ſovereign Jacob, after he had reigned ſeven years, and died in battle

tle in the actual commiſſion of treaſon, fighting againſt the prince.

Simon, the laſt Abuna, beſides living in adultery with the wife of an Egyptian called Matti, kept ſeveral young women with him as concubines; and being detected in having a daughter by one of them, with a view to conceal it, he cauſed the child to be expoſed to be devoured by the hyæna. After living in conſtant diſobedience to God's law, he joined the crime of rebellion to the repeated breach of every command in the decalogue; and appearing in battle, and excommunicating his ſovereign, God (ſays the manifeſto) delivered him into our victorious hands, and he was ſlain by a common ſoldier in the very commiſſion of his crime.

It muſt be owned, we cannot have a worſe picture of any Chriſtian church than that here given of the biſhop's church of Alexandria. Charity ſhould induce us to hope ſome exaggeration had crept into it. Yet when we conſider that the facts mentioned were all within the ſpace of forty years, and conſequently muſt have been within the knowledge, not only of Socinios, but of many people then alive and at court, we cannot, with the impartiality of an hiſtorian, deny our apprehenſions, that theſe charges were but too well founded.

However this may be, neither the king's example, nor his manifeſto, had the effect he deſired. A rebel, whom the annals call the ſon of Gabriel, declared himſelf againſt the king in Amhara, juſt at the time that Socinios, miſled by the enemies of Sela Chriſtos, had begun to entertain ſuſpicion of his loyalty, and had deprived him of the govern-

ment

ment of Gojam and the Agows. Finding, after an examination, there was no perſon that was qualified to bring this affair to a happy iſſue but Sela Chriſtos, he replaced him in his government of Gojam, giving him, at the ſame time, orders to march againſt the ſon of Gabriel into Amhara.

This command of the king, Ras Sela Chriſtos ſoon complied with, and, upon his firſt appearance in that province, the rebel retired to a high mountain which he made his place of arms, the top producing both proviſions and water ſufficient to maintain a large garriſon.

The Ras, ſeeing that force availed nothing, had recourſe to the uſual trap theſe rebels fall into. Weary of confinement on the mountain, ſenſible that he was by himſelf too weak to leave it, while ſuch an enemy expected him below, he accepted the friendſhip of the neighbouring Galla, who offered to join him in ſuch numbers as to enable him to deſcend from the mountain, and try his fortune in a battle. The treaty was concluded, and the junction no ſooner effected, than the faithleſs Galla, before gained by the Ras, fell upon the ſon of Gabriel with their clubs, and killed him on the ſpot, having ſo mangled his body that ſcarce a piece was reſerved to ſend to his enemy.

The joy this victory occaſioned at court met with a great addition by the arrival of the Romiſh patriarch. It has been before obſerved, that the king had himſelf wrote letters to the pope and king of Spain, declaring his intentions to turn Catholic. Peter Paez, Antonio Fernandes, and the other prieſts, had given a much more favourable proſpect of religious affairs than had as yet been conveyed to

Rome;

Rome; the wiſer part of the conclave, however, had doubted. But now, the king had voluntarily made his recantation, it was no longer thought time for delay, and accordingly Alphonſo Mendez, a Jeſuit doctor of divinity, a man of great learning, by birth a Portugueſe, was ordained at Liſbon the 25th of May 1624.

From thence he proceeded to India by the way of Goa, attended by ſeveral freſh miſſionaries; and finding there letters from Socinios, and a paſſport from the king of Dancali, a Mahometan prince in alliance with the Abyſſinians, he arrived at Bilur, an open bay in the ſmall and barren ſtate of Dancali, on the ſecond of May 1625, and was received, by the brother of the reigning prince, with every token of friendſhip that ſo poor a ſtate and ſovereign could afford; the king of Dancali himſelf was at the diſtance of ſix days journey, in a place where there was greater plenty of water and proviſions. The following day the king ſent four mules for the fathers to join him, and received them in a room of a round figure, ſurrounded and covered with bundles of ſtraw, but ſo low they ſcarce could raiſe themſelves after having made their bows.

In this miſerable kingdom, which I ſhall not deſcribe, as ſince that period, it has been conquered by the Galla, the patriarch and fathers ſtaid almoſt in want of neceſſaries for ſixteen days. At laſt they ſet out, having, with much difficulty, muſtered ſufficient beaſts of burden to carry their baggage. The road lay through part of the country wherein are the mines of the foſſile-ſalt, hot, barren, and abſolutely without water, and expoſed greatly

greatly to the incurſions of the Galla. After two days journey, they arrived in the morning of the third, at the foot of Senaſſé, where there was water. It is the frontier (as the name imports) of the province of Enderta, now united to the government of Tigré. It is part of that ridge of mountains which ſeparates the ſeaſons, occaſioning ſummer on the one ſide, while rain and cold prevail on the other.

On the night before they came to the mountain, while dubious of their way, a ſtar of more than ordinary magnitude, and of ſurprizing brightneſs, appeared over the patriarch, giving ſo ſtrong a light that it illuminated the heavens down to the horizon. It was not, in its place or manner of appearing, like a common ſtar, but ſtood ſtationary, in the way leading to Senaſſé, for above ſix minutes, and diſappeared *. This ſtar, the patriarch and his followers modeſtly ſay, was probably the ſame that conducted the Magi to the cradle of Chriſt, and was now ſent to ſhew them the way into Abyſſinia.

While they were at the foot of this mountain, the Muleteers, all Mahometans, thought the occaſion a proper one to plunder them, by obliging them to pay an additional hire for their beaſts, which they pretended were not able to aſcend ſo ſteep a mountain. The camels certainly could not paſs; but mules and aſſes have a more practicable road, for the ſake of carrying the ſalt. They inſiſted to leave the company till they ſhould bring them freſh mules. The carravan conſiſted of the patriarch and ſix eccleſiaſtics, prieſts, and friars, and thirteen,

* Tellez, lib. iv. cap. 38.

teen laymen, three of whom were muſicians. It was very probably their intention to have ſent to them people who would very ſoon have put a fatal period to the miſſion, had not Emanual Baradas, with a number of Abyſſinians, and officers, and plenty of all things neceſſary, joined the patriarch on the 16th of June 1625; while their late conductors, conſcious of miſbehaviour, fled without ſeeking their hire.

In five days they came to Fremona, where they ſtaid till November; and, in December, arrived at Gorgora, where they were introduced to the king in his palace. Socinios ordered the patriarch to be placed on a ſeat equal in height to his own, on his right hand; and at that very audience, which was on the 11th of February 1626, it was ſettled that the king ſhould take an oath of ſubmiſſion to the ſee of Rome.

This uſeleſs, vain, ridiculous ceremony, was accordingly celebrated on the 11th of February, with all the pageantry of a heathen feſtival or triumph. The palace was adorned with all the pomp and vanity that the church of Rome, and eſpecially that part of it, the Order of the Jeſuits, had ſolemnly abjured. The patriarch, as a mark of his ſuperiority over the Abunas, preached a ſermon in the Portugueſe language upon the paimacy of the chair of St. Peter, full of Latin quotations, which is ſaid to have had a wonderful effect upon the king and Sela Chriſtos, neither of whom underſtood one word either of Latin or Portugueſe.

That part of the patriarch's diſcourſe, which was applicable to Socinios's converſion, was anſwered

ſwered by Melca Chriſtos, governor of Samen, (himſelf a ſchiſmatic) in the language of Amhara, which neither the patriarch nor his retinue underſtood, and concluded with theſe words, "That as the king thought himſelf obliged to fulfil thoſe promiſes of ſubmitting himſelf to the ſee of Rome which his predeceſſors had made, the time was now come in which he ſhould do that, if ſuch was his pleaſure." Theſe laſt words of the orator ſeem not to have ſatisfied the zeal of Socinios. He interrupted Melca Chriſtos by ſaying, "that it was not now, but a long time ſince, that he had ſubmitted to the church of Rome, as true ſucceſſor of St. Peter; and the preſent occaſion was only a confirmation of what he had formerly profeſſed."

The patriarch anſwered by a few words, prudently and ſenſibly, I ſuppoſe to ſave time, ſeeing that, ſhort or long, his diſcourſe would not be underſtood. But proceeding to facts, he opened a new teſtament, while Socinios, upon his knees, took the following oath: "We, ſultan Segued, emperor of Ethiopia, do believe and confeſs that St. Peter, prince of the apoſtles, was conſtituted, by Chriſt our Lord, head of the whole Chriſtian church, and that he gave him the principality and dominion over the whole world, by ſaying to him, *You are Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.* And again when he ſaid, *Keep my ſheep.* Alſo we believe and confeſs, that the pope of Rome, lawfully elected, is the true ſucceſſor of St. Peter the apoſtle, in government; that he holdeth the ſame power, dignity, and primacy, in the whole Chriſ-

Chriſtian church: and to the holy father Urban VIII. of that name, by the mercy of God, pope, and our lord, and to his ſucceſſor in the government of the church, we do promiſe, offer, and ſwear true obedience, and ſubject, with humility, at his feet, our perſon and empire; ſo help us God and theſe holy goſpels before us."—After this, each man ſwore perſonal obedience, officers, prieſts, and monks, according to their ſeveral orders or conditions.

The prince royal Facilidas, purely and ſimply in the form preſcribed, took this oath, without any addition or alteration. But Ras Sela Chriſtos, heated with zeal, after repeating the formula, drawing his ſword in violent paſſion, uttered theſe words, "What has paſſed let it be paſt; but, from this day forward, he that falls from his duty this ſhall be his judge *."

This haſty ſpeech, not well underſtood, was thought by ſome to reflect on thoſe he had diſcovered to be in the confederacy with the rebel ſon of Gabriel. As the court was full of parties and diſcontent, every one applied the threat to himſelf, and all joined in a league to undo Sela Chriſtos, who had ſo wantonly declared himſelf the leader and champion of perſecution.

To this oath of obedience to the pope, he likewiſe added one to the king, and to the prince his ſucceſſor,

* It is apparently a ſpeech in a paſſion; for this Sela Chriſtos was one of the moſt learned of the Abyſſinians; yet the words themſelves, if literally tranſlated, are ſcarcely intelligible.

ſucceſſor, Facilidas, with a ſtrange clauſe, or qualification, which made what he ſaid formerly ſtill worſe :—" I likewiſe ſwear to the prince, as heir of his father in this empire, as long as he ſhall hold favour, and defend the holy Catholic faith; and if he ſhall fail in this, I hereby ſwear to be his greateſt enemy." This extravagant addition he inſiſted ſhould be impoſed upon all the officers of ſtate, and of the army then at court, and therefore did moſt deſervedly ſeal his own condemnation and puniſhment, which overtook him in the end, though it did not follow till long afterwards.

To theſe violent proceedings were added others ſtill more violent. A ſolemn excommunication was pronounced againſt all ſuch as did not keep that oath, and a proclamation was forthwith made, " That all people, in the line of being ordained prieſts, ſhould firſt embrace the Catholic religion upon pain of death; that all ſhould obſerve the form of the church of Rome in the celebration of Eaſter and Lent, under the ſame penalty;" and with that the ceremonies of the day ended.

*Tempus erit cum magno optaverit emptum,*
*Intactum Pallanta.*

It was a day ever to be marked with black, not only in the annals of Ethiopia, but in thoſe of Rome.

Although the arrival of the patriarch at Bilur had been happily effected, both as to himſelf and thoſe that attended him, it was not ſo with ſome of his brethren ſent to aſſiſt him in that miſſion.

Two

Two Jeſuits, Franciſco Machado and Bernard Pereira, had received the king's letters in India for their ſafe conduct to Bilur in Dancali. Whether by malice, or inadvertency, the king's ſecretary, inſtead of Bilur, had mentioned Zeyla in the letter.

Zeyla, an iſland belonging to the king of Adel, was of all other places that where the people were moſt inveterate againſt the Catholic religion. No ſooner did the Shekh know the quality and errand of theſe miſſionaries, than he confined them to cloſe priſon, where, after great ſuffering, they were both put to death; and, to aggravate this, a letter was written to Socinios ſtigmatizing him with the name of apoſtate from the religion of his forefathers, and applying to him many opprobrious names.

This letter, at another time, would not have failed to have been followed by the chaſtiſement it deſerved. But Adel, formerly a flouriſhing and commercial kingdom, was now fallen, and reduced to a multitude of banditti. Trade had left it. A garriſon of nominal janizaries, ſince the reign of Sultan Selim, had kept the little iſland of Zeyla for the pretended purpoſe of a cuſtomhouſe; but, in fact, it was a poſt of robbers, who only maintained themſelves there for the ſake of plundering merchants who came by ſea; while the Galla poured in numbers upon the prince from the continent, and of the ancient kingdom of Adel, had left him nothing but Auſſa the capital, a town ſituated upon a rock, on the banks of the river Hawaſh, Azab, Raheeta, and a few other miſerable villages upon

the ſea; and even part of theſe were daily falling into the hands of that enemy, deſtined very ſoon to over-run them all. This abject ſtate to which they had been reduced, we may ſuppoſe, was the only reaſon that protected them from the vengeance of a high-ſpirited prince, ſuch as Socinios certainly was.

This violent conduct of Socinios in his abjuration was followed by that of the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, perfectly in the ſame ſpirit. The clergy were re-ordained, their churches conſecrated anew, grown men as well as children again baptiſed, the moveable feaſts and feſtivals reduced to the forms and times of the church of Rome; circumciſion, polygamy, and divorce were abrogated for ever; and the many queſtions that thereupon aroſe, and which were underſtood to belong to the civil judge, the patriarch called to his tribunal excluſively.

All the tenets of the church of Alexandria, whether of faith or diſcipline, were rejected; and it was not known how far the patriarch intended to ſubject the civil juriſdiction of the judges to the eccleſiaſtical power. Two ſteps that he took, the one immediately after the other, ſeemed to give great reaſon of fear upon this head.

In order to underſtand the firſt of theſe caſes, it will be neceſſary to know, that it is a fundamental conſtitution of the monarchy of Ethiopia, that all lands belong to the king; and that there is no ſuch thing as church-lands in this country. Thoſe that the king has given for the maintenance of churches or monaſteries are reſumed every day, at

the

the inſtance of and for the convenience of individuals, and new ones granted in their ſtead ſometimes of a greater value, ſometimes of a leſs. Nor have the prieſts or monks any property in theſe lands. A lay-officer, appointed by the king, divides to each monk or prieſt, his quota of the revenue, applying any overplus to other uſes, which is, we may ſuppoſe, often putting it into his own pocket.

There was a nobleman of great diſtinction for his family and rank at court, for his age, and the merit of his ſervice; he had occupied ſome of the lands belonging to a monk who happened to be a Catholic. This man, had he been an Alexandrian, could have had no recourſe to the Abuna his patriarch, and the cauſe muſt have been tried before the civil judge. But Mendes was of another opinion. He ordered the nobleman to make his defence before the eccleſiaſtical tribunal; and, upon his refuſing this as a novelty to which he was not bound, he condemned him immediately to reſtore the lands to the monk. This, too, was refuſed on the part of the preſent poſſeſſor, who being one day attending the king at church, the patriarch, without preamble, pronounced againſt him a formal ſentence of excommunication, by which he gave him over, ſoul and body, to the devil.

Such procedure was, till then, unknown in Abyſſinia. The nobleman, though otherwiſe brave, was ſo much affected with the terms of his ſentence as to faint, imagining himſelf already in the clutches of Satan, and it was with difficulty he was reco-

vered, the king making interceſſion with the patriarch to take off this cenſure, or rather this curſe.

Sudden as it was, however, in the inflicting, and eaſy in the removal, it made very laſting and ſerious impreſſions on the minds of men of all ranks, greatly to the diſadvantage of the patriarch and the profeſſors of his new religion, in the exerciſe of which they did not diſcover that degree of charity, meekneſs, mercy, and long-ſuffering, that they had been taught were the very eſſentials of it.

The next inſtance was this: There had been an Itchegue, that is, the ſuperior of the monks of Debra Libanos, an Order inſtituted by Abba Tecla Haimanout, the laſt Abyſſinian Abuna, not more celebrated by the church than the ſtate, as being the reſtorer of the line of Solomon, for many years baniſhed to Shoa; and this ſuperior, beſides the dignity of his office, was remarkable for an innocent, pious, and holy life. It happened that a Catholic monk officiated in a church where this Itchegue had been buried under the altar; the patriarch declared the church defiled by the burial of that heretic and ſchiſmatic, and ſuſpended the celebration of divine ſervice till the body was raiſed and thrown out of the church in a moſt indecent manner. Univerſal diſcontent ſeized the minds of all men; and, from that time, it ſeemed the friends of the old religion began again to recover ſtrength, and the Catholics to be looked upon, if not with hatred, yet terror. And every trifle now contributed towards the one or the other.

The Jeſuits, following practices or cuſtoms of their own, had thought fit to exhibit a kind of religious

ligious plays or farces. The devil in theſe pieces is always the buffoon; he plays harlequin and ſlight-of-hand tricks, fires ſquibs and gun-powder, very little conſiſtent with the decency of the other perſons who compoſe the drama. This continued to be practiſed in ſeveral Catholic countries in Europe, while that learned company exiſted *. It happened to be neceſſary to introduce figures of this kind blacked all over, and in maſks, with cloven feet, &c. The firſt exhibition of theſe figures ſo ſurpriſed and terrified the Abyſſinian audience, that they fled immediately upon their appearance, crying out, Alas! alas! theſe Franks have brought devils into our country with them!

This great extenſion of civil juriſdiction, and the large ſtrides it took to annihilate the civil power, the encroachments it made upon the prerogative of the king, till now ſupreme in all cauſes eccleſiaſtical and civil, the more than regal, the more, if poſſible, than papal pride of the patriarch, began to be felt univerſally, and it was ſeen to be intended to leſſen every order of government, from the king to the loweſt officer in the province. From this time, therefore, we date the decline of the Catholic intereſt in Abyſſinia. The firſt blow was given it by the king himſelf, not with a view to deſtroy it, for he was a ſincere Catholic upon principle, but to control and keep it within ſome bounds, as he found there was no order could otherwiſe be maintained.

He deſired the patriarch to permit the uſe of the ancient liturgies of Ethiopia, altered by himſelf in every

* I have ſeen them often at Madrid.

every thing where they did not agree with that of the church of Rome. With this the patriarch was obliged to comply, becauſe there was in it an appearance of reaſon that men ſhould pray to God in a language that they underſtood, and which was their own, rather than a foreign tongue of which they did not underſtand one word. This was thought ſo obvious in Ethiopia as not to admit any doubt. But the order and practice of the church of Rome was juſt the contrary; and this wound was a mortal one; for no ſooner was the permiſſion given to uſe their own liturgies, than all the Abyſſinians embraced them to a man, and went on in their old prayers and ſervices without any of the patriarch's alterations.

To theſe events, not important in themſelves, but only from the effect they had upon the minds of mankind, ſucceeded tragedies of a more ſerious nature. I have already obſerved, in ſpeaking of the Galla, that they were divided into three principal diviſions, thoſe on the eaſt of Abyſſinia were called Bertuma Galla, thoſe on the ſouth called Toluma, and thoſe on the weſt Boren Galla; each of theſe were divided into ſeven, and theſe again ſubdivided into a number of tribes. Each of theſe ſeven nations chooſe a king once in ſeven years called Lubo; and it is uſually the firſt act of the new king's reign to over-run the neighbouring provinces of Abyſſinia, laying every thing waſte with fire and ſword for this year, even if they had no provocation, but had been at peace for ſeveral years before.

The Abyſſinians remained long in ignorance of this cauſe of theſe invaſions, and, while that was the

the caſe, they could take no meaſures to be prepared againſt, and reſiſt them. But after, when the cuſtoms of the Galla were better known, their periodical invaſions were watched and provided againſt, ſo that though they were ſtill continued, they were generally repelled with the ſlaughter and defeat of the invaders.

It happened that the preſent year, 1627, was the ſeaſon of electing the king, and of the invaſion. Though the time of the expedition was known, no intelligence had been given of the manner in which it was to be executed. In paſt times, the nations, or tribes of Galla, aſſaulted each the oppoſite province in whoſe frontiers they were ſettled; but this year it was agreed among them to chooſe one province, Gojam, which, by uniting their whole force, they were to devote to deſtruction, or, if poſſible, keep poſſeſſion of it.

Buco was governor of Gojam; the king had ſent Sela Chriſtos to his aſſiſtance, and was intending to follow with another army himſelf. In the mean time, the paſſes through which the Galla uſed to enter were all lined with men, and every preparation made to receive them.

Theſe barbarians advanced to the Nile in multitudes never ſeen before; and, finding the province perfectly on its guard, they feigned a panic, or diſagreement among themſelves, retired in ſeeming confuſion, and diſperſed, ſome, as it was ſaid, to their own homes, and ſome to an expedition againſt Narea. This in reality had often happened; but now it was only a ſtratagem; for they all aſſembled in their own country Bizamo, of which the

the Abyſſinians had no intelligence. Buco, thinking he was free of them for that year, diſbanded his troops, or detached them to other ſervices; Sela Chriſtos did the ſame; neither did Socinios advance with his army.

In that interval of weakneſs, news were ſent to Buco that the Galla had paſſed the Nile. Upon which he advanced with 1000 foot and 200 horſe, believing that it was ſome ſmall part of that army which he thought had ſome time before been diſperſed. After hearing maſs with great devotion, and receiving the ſacrament, in paſſing through a thick wood he was aſſaulted by the Galla. Being a man, brave in his own perſon, and exceedingly well-trained to arms, he fought ſo ſucceſsfully, and ſo encouraged his men by his example, that he cut that body of Galla entirely to pieces; and, as he thought the whole matter then at an end, he ordered his drums to beat, and his trumpets to ſound, in token of victory.

The reſt of the Galla, who were now diſperſed through the province, but at no great diſtance, burning and deſtroying, as their cuſtom is, and who left this body behind them only to ſecure their retreat acroſs the river, returned all to their colours, upon hearing the drums and trumpets of Kaſmati Buco, whom they did not know to be ſo near; and, as ſoon as he came in ſight, deſpiſing his ſmall number, they ſurrounded them on every ſide. Buco immediately ſaw that he was a loſt man; but, conſidering the multitude of the enemy, and the unprepared ſtate of the province, he thought his own life and thoſe of his followers could

not

not be better employed than by obſtinately fighting to diſable the enemy, ſo as to put it out of their power to purſue the ruin of the country further; throwing himſelf furiouſly into the thickeſt of the Galla, he, at firſt onſet, killed four of the moſt forward of their leaders, and made himſelf a lane through the troops oppoſing him; and he was now got without their circle, when ſome of his officers ſeeing him, cried to him to make the beſt of his way, as affairs were deſperate, and not to add by his death to the misfortunes of that day.

Upon this he pauſed, as recollecting himſelf for a moment; but, diſdaining to ſurvive the loſs of his army, he threw himſelf again among the Galla, where his men were ſtill fighting, carrying victory wherever he went. His horſe was at laſt wounded, and, being otherwiſe young and untrained, became ungovernable. It was neceſſary to quit him, when, drawing his ſword, and leaping upon the ground, he continued the fight with the ſame degree of courage, till the Galla, who did not dare to approach him near, killed him by a number of javelins thrown at a diſtance.

The news of the defeat and death of Buco reached Sela Chriſtos, then in march to join him; nor did the misfortunes that had already happened, nor the bad proſpect of his own ſituation, alter his reſolution of attacking the enemy: But he firſt wrote to the king his brother, telling him his ſituation, and the probable conſequences of doing his duty as he had determined, laying all the blame upon the malice of his enemies, who, to gratify their own private malice, had left him without aſ-

ſiſtance,

ſiſtance, and occaſioned misfortunes ſo detrimental to the common-weal.

Sela Chriſtos paſſed this night upon a riſing ground, and in the morning early deſcended into the plain, with a view of attacking the Galla, when, to his great ſurpriſe, that barbarous people, content with the ſlaughter of Kaſmati Buco and his army, and not willing to riſk a large quantity of plunder with which their whole army was loaded, had repaſſed the Nile, and returned home.

Tecla Georgis was ſon-in-law to Socinios, and then governor of Tigré, but at variance with his father-in-law upon ſome quarrel with his wife. Determined on this account to rebel, he aſſociated with ſome noblemen of the firſt rank and power in Tigré, particularly Guebra Mariam and John Akayo, declaring to them, that he would no longer ſuffer the Roman religion, but defend the ancient church of Alexandria to the utmoſt of his power. And, to convince all the Abyſſinians of his ſincerity, he tore off the figures of crucifixes and all the church ornaments and images of ſaints that were in relief, and burned them publicly, to make his reconciliation with the king impoſſible. He then called before him Abba Jacob his Catholic chaplain, and, having ſtripped him of his pontificals, killed him with his own hand. There was no method he could deviſe of bringing his quarrel ſooner to an iſſue than this which he had adopted. But he did not ſeem to have taken equal pains to provide for his defence as he had done to give provocation.

Socinios,

Socinios, upon the firſt intelligence of this murder and treaſon, ordered Keba Chriſtos to march againſt him with the troops that he had at hand. This general, equally a good ſoldier, ſubject, and Catholic, being convinced of the neceſſity of puniſhing ſpeedily ſo monſtrous a crime, paſſed by forced marches through Siré to Axum, thence to Fremona; and, having appointed Gaſpar Paez to meet him there, he confeſſed himſelf, and received the ſacrament from that Jeſuit's hands. From Fremona he continued with the ſame ſpeed, making three ordinary days marches in one, being deſirous of preventing the poſſibility of Tecla Georgis's collecting troops, and taking refuge on a mountain called *Maſka*, which he heard to be his deſign.

It was the 12th of December 1628 that news were brought him of the ſituation of the enemy; upon which he ordered his baggage to be left behind, and every ſoldier to carry two loaves, and to march without reſting till he came up with Tecla Georgis.

In the morning of the day following, two horſemen, on the ſcout before him, diſcovered five of the rebel ſoldiers upon the look-out likewiſe. Theſe, upon ſeeing Keba Chriſtos's horſemen, returned immediately to their maſter, and told him that they had ſeen armed men, and conceived them to be the ſoldiers of Keba Chriſtos. To this intelligence Tecla Georgis anſwered, That Keba Chriſtos was in the king's palace at Dancaz the 15th of November, and that it was impoſſible he then could

could be ſo near with an army, if he had even wings to fly; but that the men they had ſeen were probably reinforcements that he expected.

Keba Chriſtos, on the contrary, hearing that the enemy was at hand, drew up his army in three diviſions. The firſt conſiſted of his own houſehold, the ſecond of a body of horſe of the king's houſehold, called *the Koccob Horſe*, or *Star Cavalry*, from a ſilver ſtar which each of them wears on the front of his helmet; and the third, of the people of Tigre who had joined him. In this order he came in ſight of his enemy poſted upon a ſmall height, divided only from him by a narrow plain. Tecla Georgis, convinced now that it was Keba Chriſtos, formed his army into two diviſions; the one compoſed of a body called *Tcheraguas*, the other of a body called *Sultan ba Chriſtos*; with theſe was a large corps of Galla which had lately joined them.

Keba Chriſtos, now turning to his troops, briefly ſaid, "My children, I will not waſte my time nor yours in diſcourſe, or in telling you what you are to do. You have all arms in your hands; you are good Chriſtians; and I can poſitively aſſure you there is not before you one of your enemies that is not alſo an enemy to Chriſt." Then, placing himſelf before the Koccob horſe, he pulled off his helmet and gave it to his ſervant, ſaying, "By my naked face you ſhall know me to-day, that I am not going in the midſt of you as general or commander, but foot for foot along with you like a common ſoldier."

Upon

Upon having uncovered his head, he was quickly known by Tecla Georgis, from whoſe troops a number of muſkquets was fired at him. But this had ſo little effect upon this gallant officer, that, changing his place, (which then was at the head of the ſecond diviſion) he placed himſelf ſtill nearer the enemy in the front of his own houſehold troops, which were the firſt; and the Galla charging them in that inſtant, he ſlew their leader with his own hand. Upon the death of their commander, theſe barbarians immediately fled, as is their cuſtom, while Keba Chriſtos endeavoured to make his way to where Tecla Georgis was employed keeping his troops from following ſo bad an example. But ſo ſoon as that rebel ſaw his enemy approach him, he and his whole army joined the Galla in their flight; tho' he narrowly eſcaped, by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe, a light javelin, thrown by Keba Chriſtos, ſtriking him behind, but ſo feebly by reaſon of the diſtance, that it did not pierce his armour.

The king's troops purſued vigorouſly, and ſoon brought to their general the mule, the ſword, and helmet of Tecla Georgis, with the heads of 300 ſlain in the battle, moſt of them Gallas, and with them 12 heads of the moſt turbulent rebellious monks of Tigre. With theſe they alſo brought Adera, ſiſter to Tecla Georgis, wounded in the throat, who had inſtigated him very ſtrongly to commit the violences againſt the profeſſors of the Catholic religion. Tafa, too, his maſter of the houſehold, was taken priſoner; and it being made known to Keba Chriſtos that this man had aſſiſted

at

at the murder of Abba Jacob, he ordered him directly to be put to death.

Tecla Georgis, aided by the ſtrength of his horſe and knowledge of the country, eſcaped and concealed himſelf from his purſuers for four days; but, on the Saturday that followed the victory, he was found in a cavern with his great confidents, Woldo Mariam, and a ſchiſmatic monk whoſe name was Sebo Amlac. Tecla Georgis was carried alive to Keba Chriſtos, who ſent him to the king, his two companions being ſlain as ſoon as found, and their heads accompanied their living maſter, which, on their arrival at Dancaz, the king ordered to be hung upon a tree.

Tecla Georgis being convicted of ſacrilege as well as murder, having burnt the crucifixes and images of the ſaints, was condemned to be burnt alive, and a lime-kiln was immediately prepared in which he was to ſuffer. Upon hearing this, he deſired a Catholic confeſſor, as wiſhing to be reconciled to the church of Rome, and for this purpoſe he ſent a requeſt to the patriarch, who was at three leagues diſtance, and who diſpatched Antonio Fernandes with full powers to abſolve from all manner of ſins, and at the ſame time gave him orders to intercede ſtrongly with the king to pardon the criminal. Tecla Georgis confeſſed publicly at the door of the church, and abjured the errors of the church of Alexandria.

After this, the father Fernandes applied to the king, pleading ſtrongly for his pardon. To which the king anſwered, "Many reaſons there are why I ſhould deſire to pardon Tecla Georgis. To ſay no more,

more, he has been married to two of my daughters, and he has by them two ſons, both good ſoldiers and horſemen, who actually ride before me, and accompany me in battle. I have therefore pardoned him all the affronts and injuries he has done to me. But, were I take upon myſelf to pardon the affronts and inſults he has offered the Divine Majeſty, I ſhould turn the puniſhment of his ſins upon myſelf, my family, and kingdom; and, therefore, I refuſe your petition, and order you to return forthwith to Gorgora."

After the departure of the father, in conſideration that Tecla Georgis had again embraced the Catholic religion, the king altered his ſentence of being burnt, into that of being hanged privately in the houſe where he was then in priſon; and, for that purpoſe, the executioner had brought with him the cord with which Tecla had ordered the feet of Abba Jacob to be tied. No ſooner did he perceive that there were no hopes of pardon, by their beginning to tie his hands, than he again, with a loud voice, renounced his confeſſion, declaring that he died an Alexandrian, and that there was but one nature in Chriſt. The executioner endeavoured to ſtop his further blaſphemies, by drawing him up on the beam in the room; but he reſiſted ſo ſtrongly that there was time to inform Socinios of his abjuration: upon which the king ordered that he ſhould be hanged publicly upon a pine-tree; and he was accordingly taken down, half-ſtrangled, from the beam in the houſe, and hung upon the tree before the palace.

Adera,

Adera, his ſiſter, was next examined; and it being clearly proved that ſhe had been a very active agent in the murder of Abba Jacob, ſhe likewiſe was condemned to be hanged upon the ſame tree with her brother, fifteen days afterwards.

All that interval, the queen and ladies at court employed their utmoſt intereſt with the king to pardon Adera, for they looked upon it as a diſgraceful thing, both to their ſex and quality, that a woman of her family ſhould be thus executed. All the ladies of the court having joined, therefore, in a public petition to the king while on his throne, he is ſaid to have anſwered them by the following ſhort parable:—

"There was once an old woman, who being told of the death of an infant, ſaid, with great indifference, Children are but tender; it is no wonder that they die, for any thing will kill a child. Being told of a youth dying, ſhe obſerved, Young people are forward and raſh; they are always in the way of ſome diſaſter; no wonder they die; it is impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe. But being told an old woman was dead, ſhe began to tear her hair, and lament, crying, Now the world is at an end if old women begin to die, fearing that her turn might be the next. In this manner all of you have ſeen Tecla Georgis die, and alſo ſeveral of his companions, and you have not ſaid a word. But now it is come to the hanging of one woman, you are all alarmed, and the world is at an end. Do not then deceive yourſelves, but be aſſured that the ſame cord which tied the feet of Abba Jacob, ſtill remains ſufficient to hang that ſow Adera, and all

all thoſe that ſhall be ſo wicked as to behave like her, to the diſgrace of your ſex, and their own rank and quality."

The effects of theſe oſtentatious acts of reformation ſoon produced conſequences which troubled their joy. The Agows of Laſta, called Tcheratz Agow, who live at the head of the Tacazze, rebelled. The country they occupy is not extenſive, but exceedingly populous, and was ſuppoſed at that time to be able to bring into the field above 50,000 fighting men, beſides leaving behind a ſufficient number to defend the paſſes and ſtrong-holds of their country, which are by much the moſt difficult and inacceſſible of any in Abyſſinia. They are divided into five clans, Waag, Tettera, Dehaanah, Goulion, and Louta, each having an independent chief. They are exceedingly warlike; and, though the country be ſo rude and rocky, they have a conſiderable number of good horſes; and are in general reckoned among the braveſt and moſt barbarous ſoldiers in Abyſſinia. Their province abounds with all ſorts of proviſions, and they rarely can be forced to pay any thing to government in the name of tax, or tribute.

Tecla Georgis was now dead, but the cauſe of the rebellion ſtill ſubſiſted. While governor of Begemder, he had connived at many abuſes of his officers who occupied the poſts neareſt to Laſta. Theſe being young men, from wantonneſs only, without provocation, had made many different inroads, driving away cattle, and committing many other exceſſes. The Agows carried their complaints to the governor, who, far from hearing or redreſſing

redreſſing their wrongs, juſtified the conduct of his officers, by making inroads himſelf immediately after; but coming to an action in perſon with that people, he was ſhamefully beat, and a great part of his army left dead upon the field.

This misfortune very much affected Socinios. Nor did the Agows themſelves doubt, but that a ſpeedy chaſtiſement was to follow this victory over Tecla Georgis.

There was a youth deſcended of the royal family, who, to preſerve the freedom of his perſon, lived among the Galla, in expectation of better times. His name was Melca Chriſtos. To him the Agows applied, that, with this prince of the houſe of Solomon at their head, they might wipe off the odium of being reputed rebels, and appear as fighting under a lawful ſovereign for reformation of abuſes. The renunciation of the Alexandrian faith, forcibly obtruded upon them by Socinios, ſerved as cauſe of complaint. The Roman Catholic writers in the hiſtory of this miſſion, ſay this was but a pretext, in which I conceive they are right. I have lived among the Agows of Laſta, and in intimacy with many of them, who are not, to this day, ſo anxious about Chriſtianity as to aſcend one of their hills for the difference between that and Paganiſm; and I am ſatisfied, for theſe 300 years laſt paſt there has been ſcarcely a common layman in Laſta that has known the diſtinction between the Alexandrian and the Roman church.

In the beginning of February 1629 the king marched from Dancaz towards Gojam, where he collected

collected an army of 30,000 men, which, with the baggage, ſervants, and attendants, at that time very great and numerous, amounted to above 80,000 men.

Socinios detached a number of ſmall parties to enter Laſta at different places. On the other hand, Melca Chriſtos aſſembled his troops on the moſt inacceſſible rocks; whence, when he ſpied occaſion, he came ſuddenly down and ſurpriſed the enemy below. Among all the rude, high, and tremendous mountains of which this country conſiſts, there is one eſpecially, called by the name of *Laſta*. It is in the territory of Waag, ſtrongly ſurrounded with inacceſſible precipices, having a large plain on the top, abounding with every thing neceſſary, and watered by a fine ſtream that never fails.

The manner in which the Agows remained ſecure in this ſtrong poſt was miſconſtrued into fear by the king's army, which, in two diviſions, advanced to the attack of the mountain. That on the right had with ſome difficulty ſcrambled up without oppoſition; but, being now arrived to the ſteep part of the rock, ſuch a number of large ſtones was rolled down upon them from above, that this diviſion of the army was entirely deſtroyed. The number of ſtones on the brink of the precipices was inexhauſtible; and, once put in motion, purſued the ſcattered troops with unavoidable ſpeed, even down to the plains below. Among the ſlain was Guebra Chriſtos, the king's ſon-in-law, daſhed to pieces by the fragment of a rock. The left diviſion was upon the point of ſuffering the ſame misfortune, had not Keba Chriſtos

come to their relief and drawn them off, juſt before the enemy had begun to diſcharge this irreſiſtible artillery againſt them.

The king, thus ſhamefully beaten, retired to Dancaz, leaving the entrances from Laſta ſtrongly defended, leſt theſe mountaineers ſhould, by way of retaliation, fall upon the province of Begemder. But the late ill-fortune had diſpirited the troops, and cauſed an indifference about duty, a want of obedience, and a relaxation in diſcipline in the whole army. Each of the detachments, therefore, one after the other, left their poſt from different excuſes, and returned home. The bad conſequence of this was now experienced. The Agows entered Begemder ſpreading deſolation everywhere. Melca Chriſtos, no longer ſculking among the rocks of Laſta, planted his ſtandard upon the plain, within five days march of the capital where the king was reſiding.

The jealouſies that had ariſen between Socinios and his brother-in-law Sela Chriſtos, had been ſo much aggravated ſince the oath adminiſtered by the patriarch, that the king had again deprived him of Gojam, ſuffering him to live in obſcurity in Damot, and among the Agows, occupied, as the Jeſuits ſay, in the converſion of that Pagan people, by deſtroying their idols, which they repreſent to be a ſpecies of cane or bamboo *, and in forbidding the ceremonies of adoration and devotion, which at ſtated times they paid to the river.

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* Called by the Agows, Krihaha.

No remedy could be propoſed, but the preſence of Sela Chriſtos, who, upon the firſt warning, joined the king, and coming ſuddenly upon the army of Laſta occupied in laying waſte the low country of Begemder, gave them ſuch an overthrow that ſufficiently compenſated the firſt loſs of the king, and forced them again to take refuge among their ſtrong-holds in Laſta.

A misfortune of another kind followed this victory: Laecc Mariam, a near relation to the king, was appointed governor of Begemder; but no ſooner did he ſee himſelf veſted with that government, than he meditated ſhaking off his allegiance to Socinios.

The king, after his laſt battle with the Agows, had named his ſon Facilidas commander in chief of his forces; and, to ſecure him a powerful and able aſſiſtant, he had firſt reſtored Sela Chriſtos to his government of Gojam, then ſent him with an army to join Facilidas, and command under him.

The ſucceſs was anſwerable to the prudence of the meaſure; for, immediately upon their arrival, they obliged Laeca Mariam to ſeek for refuge in the mountains of Amhara, and, without giving him time to recollect himſelf there, forced their way to the mountain to which he had retired, and from which he and his followers had no way to eſcape, but by venturing down a ſteep precipice; in attempting this, Laeca Mariam fell, and was daſhed to pieces, as were many others of his followers; the reſt were ſlain by the army that purſued them.

At this time, Facilidas began to attract the eyes of the nation in general. Beſides perſonal bravery, he

he had ſhewn great military talents in the former campaign of Laſta. Though young, he was in capacity and reſolution equal to his father, but leſs warm, more reſerved in his temper and diſcourſe. He was thought to be an enemy to the Catholic religion, becauſe he did not promote it, and neither exceeded nor fell ſhort of what his father commanded him. Yet, he lived with the Jeſuits on ſuch an even footing, that they confeſs they did not know whether he was their friend or enemy: he kept one of their number, called Father Angelis, conſtantly in his houſehold, where he was much favoured, and conſtantly in his preſence. He was thought to be an enemy to Sela Chriſtos, though he never had ſhewn it.

Facilidas received a flattering meſſage from Urban VIII. but did not anſwer it; nor does it appear his father ever deſired him; for, through the whole courſe of the life of Socinios, as his enemies are forced to confeſs, he paid to his father's will, the moſt paſſive obedience in every thing. The tyranny, however, of church-government began to appear unmaſked; and it is probable that the king, though reſolved to die a Roman Catholic from principles of conſcience, was indifferent about forging for his ſon the chains he had himſelf worn with pain.

However this may be, the laſt ſtep of placing Facilidas at the head of the army was conſtrued as another ſtroke of humiliation to the Catholics, eſpecially as it was followed with the removal of Keba Chriſtos (the ſupport of that religion) from court, where he had been appointed Billetana Gueta.

ta. It is true he was removed by what, in other times, would have been called preferment; but things had now changed their qualities, and places were not eſtimated, as formerly, by the conſequence they gave in the empire, but by the opportunities they afforded of conſtant acceſs to the king, and occaſion of joining in councils with him, and defeating thoſe of their enemies.

Keba Chriſtos being ſent governor to Tigre, was to enter Laſta from that quarter on the N. E. He is ſaid to have received his appointment with a great degree of concern, and to have told his friends, that he foreſaw he never was to return from that expedition, which he did not regret, becauſe he was convinced, by living much longer, it would be made his duty to aſſiſt at the fall of the Catholic religion.

After having performed his devotions at Fremona, this general advanced through Gouliou, a territory moſtly inhabited by Galla, and deſtitute of any ſort of proviſions; after which he took poſſeſſion of the mountains of Laſta, with a view to cover the march of the young prince Facilidas, whom he every day expected. But that prince not appearing in time, and proviſions becoming ſcarce, no meaſure remained but making his retreat to Tigre; and, although he formed the beſt diſpoſition for that purpoſe, the people of Laſta obſerving his intention in time, on his firſt movement attacked his rear-guard while he was deſcending the mountain, and put it to flight: being thereby maſters of the higher ground, they had the command of the cowardly ſoldiers below them, who could not

not inſure their deſtruction more certainly than by the indecent manner in which they were flying.

Keba Chriſtos, deſerted by all except a few ſervants, continued courageouſly fighting; and, although it was very poſſible for him to have eſcaped, he diſdained to ſurvive the loſs of his army. Receiving at that time a wound from a javelin, which paſſed through his belly, and judging the ſtroke to be mortal, he gave up all further reſiſtance, fell upon his knees to prayer, and was again wounded by a ſtone, which ſtruck him to the ground. Two of the mountaineers immediately came up to him, one of whom did not know him, and contented himſelf with ſtripping the body; but the other remembering his face, cut his head off, and carried it to the rebel Melca Chriſtos.

The misfortune was followed by another in Gojam, great to the nation in general, and greater ſtill to the Catholic cauſe in particular. At the time that Sela Chriſtos was in Begemder with prince Facilidas, the Galla from Bizamo, ſuppoſing the province of Damot without defence, paſſed the Nile, laying the whole province waſte before them. Fecur Egzie, lieutenant-general under Sela Chriſtos, although he had with him only a ſmall number of troops, did not heſitate to march againſt thoſe ſavages, to endeavour, if poſſible, to ſtop their ravages. The Galla, ſurpriſed at this, thought it was Sela Chriſtos, and fled before him. He had now purſued them almoſt alone, and lighted in a low meadow to give graſs to his horſe, when he was ſurrounded and ſlain by a number of the enemy

that

that lay hid among the buſhes, and diſcovered how ill he was attended.

He was reputed a man of the beſt underſtanding, and the moſt liberal ſentiments of any in Ethiopia; a great orator, excelling both in the gracefulneſs of manner and copiouſneſs and purity of his language. He was among the firſt that embraced the Catholic religion, even before the king or Sela Chriſtos, and was the principal promoter of the tranſlations of the Portugueſe books into Ethiopic, aſſiſted by the Jeſuit Antonio de Angelis. We have ſeen, in 1613, the great efforts he made in the embaſſy to India by the coaſt of Melinda. He was an excellent horſeman, but more violent and raſh in battle than could have been expected from a man of ſuch mild manners.

There happened at this time another novelty. The king brought the patriarch from Gongora to Dancaz this year, at Eaſter, to hear that feaſt celebrated, with the Ethiopic ſervice amended, of which we have already ſpoken abundantly. This countenance, ſo unneceſſarily given to an innovation that produced every day ſuch very bad effects to the Catholic intereſt, joined to many other circumſtances, ſeemed clearly to indicate a change in that prince's mind.

The patriarch having made but a ſhort ſtay at Dancaz, it was currently reported a diſagreement had happened, and that the king had ſent him priſoner to Gorgora; and this falſe report affected greatly the weight the Catholics were ſuppoſed before to have had at court. But the tranſaction that followed

followed was of a nature to promiſe much more conſequences.

Socinios had a daughter called *Ozoro Wengelawit*, which means the Evangelical, a name ſhe certainly deſerved not from her manners. This lady was firſt married to Bela Chriſtos, a man of rank at court, from whom ſhe had been divorced. She was next married to another, and then (her two former huſbands being ſtill alive) to Tecla Georgis, who had before married her ſiſter, another of the king's daughters. During this marriage ſhe had openly lived in adultery with Za Chriſtos, who had been married to her ſiſter, a third daughter of the king. Za Chriſtos had been happy enough in preſerving this lady's eſteem longer than any other of her huſbands, and nothing would content her now but a marriage with her lover ſolemnly and publicly. For which purpoſe ſhe applied to the patriarch to diſpenſe with the affinity between her and Za Chriſtos, ariſing from his having been married before to her ſiſter.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that the patriarch would have reſiſted, if nothing had ſtood in the way except the affinity: but weighty impediments preſented themſelves beſides; for either the firſt marriage was valid, or it was not. If it was valid, then Wengelawit, could not marry Za Chriſtos or any one elſe, becauſe her huſband was alive; nor could ſhe marry her ſecond, nor Tecla Georgis, her third. If the firſt marriage was not valid, then the ſecond was, which huſband was ſtill alive; and, in this caſe, a licence to marry was giving her liberty of having three huſbands at one time. The patriarch,

patriarch, for theſe reaſons, refuſed his authority to this manifold adultery and inceſt; nor could he, notwithſtanding the interceſſion of the whole court, ever be brought to comply. His firmneſs (however commendable) greatly increaſed the hatred to his perſon, and averſion to the church of Rome.

One day when the king was ſitting in his apartment, a monk entered the room, crying with a loud voice, "Hear the ambaſſador of God and of "the Virgin Mary!" The king, upon firſt ſight of the man, expecting ſome improper liberty might be taken, ordered his attendants to turn him out at the door, and, being removed from his preſence, to bring word what he had to ſay, which was to this effect: "It is three days ſince I roſe from the dead. One day when I was ſtanding in paradiſe, God called me, and ſent me with this meſſage to you: —O emperor! ſays God, it is now many years that I hoped you would amend of the great ſin, the having forſaken the faith of your anceſtors. All this time the Virgin Mary was kneeling before her bleſſed Son, beſeeching him to pardon you; and, upon the whole, it was agreed, that, unleſs you repent in a fortnight's time, you ſhould be puniſhed in ſuch a manner that you will not forget it preſently."

Socinios deſired them to aſk the man, "How it was poſſible that, having ſo lately left the grave, his body ſhould have ſo little of the emaciated appearance of one long buried, and be now in ſuch good caſe, fat and fair?" To this he anſwered, "That, in paradiſe, he thanked God, there was abundance of every thing; and people were very well

well uſed there, for he had lived upon good bread, and plenty of good wine, biſkets, and ſweetmeats." To which Socinios anſwered, " Tell him, after the pains he had taken, it would be wrong in me to keep him from ſo good a place as this his paradiſe. Let him go and acquaint the perſon who ſent him, I ſhall live and die in the Roman Catholic faith; and, in order that he may deliver the meſſage quickly in the other world, ſpeed him inſtantly out of this, by hanging him upon the tree before the palace-gate."

The love of the wine, ſweetmeats, and other celeſtial food, ſeemed to have forſaken the ambaſſador. Upon hearing this meſſage he recanted, and was pardoned at the joint petition of thoſe of the court that were preſent, who concurred with the monk in thinking, that the meſſage of the emperor was an indecent one, and ought not to be delivered; that having been in paradiſe once, was as much as fell to the lot of any one man, and that he ſhould therefore remain upon earth. The intended cataſtrophe, then, of this ſingular ambaſſador was remitted; but the truth of his miſſion was believed by the populace, and raiſed great ſcruples in every weak mind.

The many misfortunes that had lately befallen the troops of the king were accounted as ſo much increaſe of power to the rebel Melca Chriſtos, who, encouraged by the correſpondence he held with the chiefs of the Alexandrian religion, began now to take upon him the ſtate and office of a king. His firſt eſſay was to ſend, as governor to the province of Tigre, a ſon of that great rebel Za Selaſſe, whoſe manifold

manifold treaſons, we have already ſeen, occaſioned the death of two kings, Za Denghel and Jacob.

Aſca Georgis was then governor of Tigre for Socinios, a man of merit and valour, but poor, and though related to the king himſelf, had very few ſoldiers to be depended on, excepting his own ſervants, and two bodies of troops which the king had ſent him to maintain his authority, and to keep his province in order.

The new governor, ſent by the rebel Melca Chriſtos, had with him a conſiderable army; and, knowing the weakneſs of Aſca Georgis, he paraded through the province in the utmoſt ſecurity.

One Saturday which, in defiance of the king's, edict, he was to ſolemnize as a feſtival equal to Sunday, he had reſolved on a party of pleaſure in a valley, where, much at his eaſe, he was preparing an entertainment for his troops and friends and ſuch of the province as came to offer their obedience. Intelligence of this party came to three Shums, commanders of ſmall diſtricts, two of them ſons-in-law of the king, the third a very loyal ſubject. Theſe three ſent to Aſca Georgis, to propoſe that, at a ſtated time, they ſhould, each with his own men, fall ſeparately upon the ſon of Za Selaſſe, and interrupt his entertainment.

This was executed with great order and punctuality. In the height of the feſtival, the rebels were ſurrounded by an unexpected enemy. To think of fighting was too late, nor was there time for flight. The greateſt part of the army was cut to pieces with little reſiſtance. The new governor ſaved himſelf among the reſt by the goodneſs of his

his horſe, leaving Billetana Gueta, or chief maſter of the houſehold of the rebel Melca Chriſtos, dead upon the ſpot, with about 4000 of his men. Among the plunder were taken 32 kettle-drums, which alone were evidence ſufficient of the greatneſs of the ſlaughter.

Although the happy turn Socinios's affairs had taken had given him leiſure to paſs this winter at home, and greater quiet than he had done in former ones, yet the calm which it had produced was of very ſhort duration. The people of Laſta, perceiving ſome of the prince's army buſy in deſtroying their harveſt when almoſt ripe, came down ſuddenly upon them from the mountain, and put them to flight with very great ſlaughter. The blame of this was laid upon Sela Chriſtos, who might have prevented the calamity; and this accuſation, with many others, were brought againſt him to the king by Leſana Chriſtos.

This man had been condemned to die for an offence, ſome time before, by Ras Sela Chriſtos; but having fled to the king, who heard his cauſe, the ſentence was reverſed. Some time after this he fell into the hands of the Ras, who put him to death upon his former ſentence, without regarding the late pardon of the king. This violent act became the foundation upon which his enemies built many accuſations, moſtly void of truth.

The king upon this took from him the government of Gojam, and gave it to a young nobleman whoſe name was Serca Chriſtos, ſuppoſed to be a friend and dependent upon the prince Facilidas.

Serca

Serca Chriſtos was no ſooner arrived in his government than he reſolved to rebel, and privately ſolicited the young prince Facilidas to take up arms and make a common cauſe againſt the king his father, in favour of the Alexandrian church. At the time that the young man departed to his government, Socinios had earneſtly recommended to him, and he had moſt ſolemnly promiſed, to protect the Catholic religion in his province, and ſeemingly for this purpoſe he had taken with him a Jeſuit named Franciſco de Carvalho.

Another affair which the king particularly charged him with was, the care of a caravan which once a-year came from Narea. This, beſides many other valuable articles for the merchant, brought 1000 wakeas of gold as tribute to the king, equal to about 10,000 dollars, or crowns of our money: its whole way was through barbarous and lawleſs nations of Galla till they arrived at the Nile; then through Gafats and Gongas, immediately after having paſſed it.

Serca Chriſtos, in his march, was come to a ſettlement of thoſe laſt-mentioned ſavages, where Gafats, Agows, and Damots, all in peace, paſtured immenſe flocks of cattle together. There are no where, I believe, in the world, cattle ſo beautiful as thoſe of the Gafats, nor in ſuch numbers. Large plains, for many days journey, are filled ſo full of theſe that they appear as one market.

Serca Chriſtos halted here to give graſs to his horſes; and, while this was doing, it entered into his young head, that making prize of the cattle was of much greater conſequence than protecting the

caravan

caravan of Narea. Aſſembling then his cavalry, he fell upon the poor Gafats and Damots, who feared no harm; and, having ſoon put them all to flight, he drove off their cattle in ſuch numbers, that, at Dancaz, it was ſaid, above 100,000 had reached that market.

The king, much ſhocked at this violent robbery, ordered Serca Chriſtos to give up the cattle, and ſurrender himſelf as priſoner. This meſſage of the king he anſwered in terms of duty and obedience; but, in the mean time, went to the prince, and propoſed to him to declare himſelf king and champion of the church of Alexandria. Facilidas received him with ſharp reproofs, and he returned home much diſcontented. However, as he had now declared himſelf, he reſolved to put the beſt face upon the matter; and, in order to make it generally believed that the prince and he underſtood each other, he ſent him publicly word, "I have done what your highneſs ordered me; come and take poſſeſſion of your kingdom." Upon which the prince ordered his meſſenger to be put in irons, and ſent to Dancaz to the king his father.

After this, Serca Chriſtos ordered proclamation to be made that prince Facilidas was king, at the palace of the governor of Gojam, which Sela Chriſtos had built near the convent of Collela. As one article of it was the aboliſhing the Roman faith, the fathers ran precipitately into the convent, and ſhut the doors upon themſelves, fearing they ſhould be inſulted by the army of ſchiſmatics; but a number of the Portugueſe, who lived in the neighbourhood, being brought into the church with them

them, and there having loop-holes made in the walls, and abundance of fire-arms left there in depoſit by Sela Chriſtos, the rebel governor did not chooſe to attempt any thing againſt them at that time. On the contrary, he ſent them word that he was in his heart a Roman Catholic, and only, for the preſent, obliged to diſſemble; but he would protect them to the utmoſt, deſiring them to ſend him the fire-arms left there by Sela Chriſtos, which they abſolutely refuſed to do.

Serca Chriſtos, apprehending that his army (if not acting under ſome chief of the royal family) would forſake him on the firſt appearance of the prince, had recourſe to a child of the blood-royal, then living in obſcurity among his female relations, and this infant he made king, in hopes, if he ſucceeded, to govern during his minority. There were many who expected the prince would reconcile him to the king, eſpecially as he had yet preſerved a ſhadow of reſpect for the Jeſuits, and this he imagined was one cauſe why the ſchiſmatics had not joined him in the numbers neceſſary. In order to ſhew them that he deſigned no reconciliation with the king, and to make ſuch agreement impoſſible, he adopted the ſame ſacrilegious example that had ſo ill ſucceeded with Tecla Georgis.

Za Selaſſe, a prieſt of Selalo, had been heard to ſay, when Serca Chriſtos was appointed to the government of Gojam, "There is an end of the Catholic faith in this province." Being now called before the governor, he was forbid to ſay maſs according to the forms of the church of Rome. This the prieſt ſubmitted to; but, being ordered to deny the two natures in Chriſt, he declared this was a

point of faith which he would never give up, but always confeſs Chriſt was perfect God and perfect man. Upon this Serca Chriſtos ordered him to be ſlain; and he was accordingly thruſt through with many lances, repeating theſe words, God and man! God and man! till his laſt breath.

Serca Chriſtos had now drawn the ſword, and thrown away the ſcabbard. Upon receiving the news, the king ordered the prince, who waited but his command, to march againſt him. The murder of Za Selaſſe had procured an acceſſion of fanatics and monks, but very few ſoldiers; ſo that as ſoon as he heard with what diligence the prince was advancing, he left his whole baggage, and fled into thoſe high and craggy mountains that form the banks of the Nile in Damot.

The prince preſſed cloſely upon him, notwithſtanding the difficulty of the ground; ſo that no ſafety remained for him but to paſs the Nile into the country of the Galla, where he thought himſelf in ſafety. In this, however, he was miſtaken. He had to do with a general of the moſt active kind, in the perſon of Facilidas, who croſſed the Nile after him, and, the third day, forced him to a battle on ſuch ground as the prince had choſen, who was likewiſe much his ſuperior in number of troops. But there was no longer any remedy; Serca Chriſtos made the beſt that he could of this neceſſity, and fought with great obſtinacy, till his men being for the moſt part ſlain, he was forced, with the few that remained, to take refuge on a high hill, whence the prince obliged him to deliver himſelf up to his mercy without condition.

Facilidas

Facilidas immediately diſpatched news of his victory to court, and fifteen days after, he followed himſelf, bringing Serca Chriſtos, with ſix of his principal officers and counſellors, loaded with heavy chains. Being interrogated by the judges, What he had to anſwer for his treaſons? the priſoner denied that he had any occaſion to anſwer, becauſe he had already received pardon from the prince. This excuſe was not admitted, the prince having diſowned it abſolutely. Upon which he was ſentenced to death; and, though he appealed to the king, his ſentence was confirmed.

It was too late to execute the ſentence that night, but next morning the ſeven priſoners were put to death. One of the principal ſervants of Serca Chriſtos being aſked to confeſs and turn Catholic, abandoned himſelf to great rage, uttering many curſes and blaſphemies againſt the king, who, therefore ordered him to be faſtened upon a hook of iron, where he continued his curſes till at laſt he was ſlain by lances.

Serca Chriſtos, couſin to Socinios, was treated with more reſpect. He, with ſeeming candour, declared, that he would die a Catholic; and the king, very deſirous of this, gave orders to Diego de Mattos, a prieſt, to attend him conſtantly in priſon. After which, one night he ſent five of his confidential ſervants, who killed him privately, to prevent his recantation.

Socinios had again taken Gojam from Sela Chriſtos; which laſt diſgrace ſo affected him, that he deſired to retire and live as a private man in that province.

The king, having now no other enemy, all his attention was employed in a campaign againſt Melca Chriſtos of Laſta. But, as he found his army full of diſaffection, it was propoſed to him, before he took the field, to content them ſo far as to indulge the Alexandrians in ſome rites of the old church; and a proclamation was accordingly made by the king, "That thoſe who choſe to ob- "ſerve the Wedneſday as a faſt, inſtead of Satur- day, might do it;" and ſome other ſuch indulgences as theſe were granted, which were underſtood to affect the faith.

As ſoon as this came to the ears of the patriarch, he wrote a very ſharp letter to the king, reproving him for the proclamation that he had made; add- ing, that it was an encroachment upon the office of the prieſthood, that he, a layman, ſhould take upon him to direct in matters merely eccleſiaſtical. He warned the king, moreover, that God would call him to the very ſtricteſt account for this pre- ſumption, and reminded him of the words of Azarias the chief prieſt to the king Uzziah, and of the puniſhment of leproſy that followed the king's encroachment on the eccleſiaſtical function; and inſiſted upon Socinios contradicting his proclama- tion by another.

Socinios ſo far complied, that the alteration made by the laſt proclamation was confined to three ar- ticles. Firſt, that no liturgy, unleſs amended by the patriarch, was to be uſed in divine ſervice. Secondly, that all feaſts, excepting Eaſter and thoſe that depended upon it, ſhould be kept according to the ancient computation of time. And, thirdly,

that,

that, whoever choſe, might faſt on Wedneſday, rather than on the Saturday.

At the ſame time, the king expreſſed himſelf as greatly offended at the freedom of the application of the ſtory of Azarias and Uzziah to him. He told the patriarch plainly, that it was not by his ſermons, nor thoſe of the fathers, nor by the miracles they wrought, nor by the deſire of the people, but by his edicts alone, that the Roman religion was introduced into Ethiopia; and, therefore, that the patriarch had not the leaſt reaſon to complain of any thing being altered by the authority that firſt eſtabliſhed it. But, from this time, it plainly appears, that Socinios began to entertain ideas, at leaſt of the church diſcipline and government, very oppoſite to thoſe he had when he firſt embraced the Romiſh religion.

The king now ſet out in his campaign for Laſta with a large army, which he commanded himſelf, and under him his ſon, the prince Facilidas. Upon entering the mountain, he divided his army into three diviſions. The firſt commanded by the prince, and under him Za Mariam Adebo his maſter of the houſehold, was ordered to attack, ſcale, and lodge themſelves on the higheſt part of the mountain. The ſecond he gave to Guebra Chriſtos, governor of Begemder; and in this he placed the regiment, or body of troops, called Inaches, veteran ſoldiers of Sela Chriſtos, and a ſmall, but brave body of troops containing the ſons of Portugueſe: Theſe he directed to occupy the valleys and low ground. In the center the king commanded in perſon.

The

The rebel chief and his mountaineers remained in a ſtate of ſecurity; for they neither thought to be ſo ſpeedily attacked, nor that Socinios could have raiſed ſo large an army. They abandoned, therefore, the lower ground, and all took poſts upon the heights. The prince advanced to the firſt entrance, and ordered Damo, his Billetana Gueta, to force it with four companies of good ſoldiers, who aſcended the mountain with great perſeverance; and, notwithſtanding the obſtinate defence of the rebels, made themſelves maſter of that poſt, having killed two of the braveſt officers Melca Chriſtos had, the one named Billene, the other Tecla Mariam, ſurnamed *defender of the Faith*, becauſe he was the firſt that brought Galla to the aſſiſtance of Melca Chriſtos.

There were likewiſe ſlain, at the ſame time, four prieſts and five monks, after a deſperate reſiſtance; one of whom, calling the king's troops Moors, forbade them to approach for fear of defiling him, and then, with a book in his hand, threw himſelf over the rock, and was daſhed to pieces in the plain below. Here the prince met with an enemy he did not expect: The cold was ſo exceſſive, that above fifty perſons were frozen to death.

The top of the mountain, which was the ſecond entry into Laſta, was occupied by a ſtill larger body of rebels, and, therefore, neceſſary to be immediately ſtormed, elſe thoſe below were in imminent danger of being daſhed to pieces by the large ſtones rolled down upon them. The prince divided his army into two parties, exhorting them, without loſs of time, to attack that poſt; but the rebels, ſeeing the good countenance with which they aſcended,

cended, forſook their ſtation and fled; ſo that this ſecond mountain was gained with much leſs loſs and difficulty than the firſt.

Behind this, and higher than all the reſt, appeared the third, which ſtruck the aſſailants at firſt with terror and deſpair. This was carried with ſtill leſs loſs on the part of the prince, becauſe he was aſſiſted by the Inaches and Portugueſe, who cut off the communication below, and hindered one mountain from ſuccouring the other. Here they found great ſtore of arms, offenſive and defenſive; coats of mail, mules, and kettle drums; and they penetrated to the head-quarters of Melca Chriſtos, which was a ſmall mountain, but very ſtrong in ſituation, where a Portugueſe captain ſeized the ſeat which ſerved as a throne to the rebel; and, had not they loſt time by falling to plunder, they would have taken Melca Chriſtos himſelf, who with difficulty eſcaped, accompanied by ten horſe.

To this laſt mountain Socinios repaired with the prince, and they were joined by the governors of Amhara and Tigre, who had forced their way in from the oppoſite ſide.

Hitherto all had gone well with the king; but when he had detached Guebra Chriſtos, governor of Begemder, with the Inaches and Portugueſe, who were at ſome diſtance, to deſtroy the crop, the mountaineers, again aſſembled on a high hill above them, ſaw their opportunity, and fell ſuddenly upon the ſpoilers, and cut all the ſoldiers of Begemder to pieces. A conſiderable part of the Inaches fell alſo; but the reſt, joining themſelves with the

Portugueſe

Portugueſe in one body, made good their retreat to the head-quarters.

The deſtruction of the corn everywhere around them, and the impoſſibility of bringing proviſions there, as they were ſituated in the midſt of their enemies, obliged the king to think of returning before the rebels ſhould collect themſelves, and cut off his retreat. And it was with great difficulty, and ſtill greater loſs, he accompliſhed this, and retired to Dancaz, abandoning Laſta as ſoon as he had ſubdued it, but leaving Begemder almoſt a prey to the rebels whom he had conquered in Laſta.

Socinios being now determined upon another campaign again Laſta, and for the relief of Begemder, ordered his troops to hold themſelves in readineſs to march as ſoon as the weather ſhould permit. But an univerſal diſcontent had ſeized the whole army. They ſaw no end to this war, nor any repoſe from its victories obtained with great bloodſhed, without ſpoil, riches, or reward; no territory acquired to the king, nor nation ſubdued; but the time, when they were not actually in the field, filled up with executions and the conſtant effuſion of civil blood, that ſeemed to be more horrid than war itſelf. They, therefore, poſitively refuſed to march againſt Laſta; and the prince was deputed by them to inform the king, that they did not ſay the Roman faith was a bad one, as they did not underſtand it, nor deſire to be inſtructed; that this was an affair which entirely regarded themſelves, and no one would pretend to ſay there was any merit in profeſſing a religion they did not underſtand

ſtand or believe: that they were ready, however, to march and lay down their lives for the king and common weal, provided he reſtored them their ancient religion, without which they would have no concern in the quarrel, nor even wiſh to be conquerors. Whether the king was really in the ſecret or not, I ſhall not ſay; but it is expreſsly mentioned in the annals of his reign, that Socinios did promiſe by his ſon to the army, that he would reſtore the Alexandrian faith, if he ſhould return victorious over Laſta; and the ſudden manner in which he executed this, muſt convince every other perſon that it was ſo.

The army now marched from Dancaz, upon intelligence arriving that the rebels had left their ſtrong-holds in Laſta, and were in their way to the capital to give the king battle there. It was the 26th of July 1631 the king diſcovered, by his ſcouts, that the rebel Melca Chriſtos was at hand, having with him an army of about 25,000 men. Upon this intelligence he ordered his troops to halt, and hear maſs from Diego de Mattos; and, having choſen his ground, he halted again at midday, and confeſſed, according to the rite of the church of Rome, and then formed his troops in order of battle.

It was not long till the enemy came in ſight, but without ſhewing that alacrity and deſire of engaging they uſed to do when in their native mountains. The king, at the head of the cavalry, fell ſo ſuddenly and ſo violently upon them, that he broke through the van-guard commanded by Melca Chriſtos, and put them to flight before his foot could

could come up. The reſt of the army followed the example of the leader, and the enemy were every where trodden down and deſtroyed by the victorious horſe, till night put an end to the purſuit.

Melca Chriſtos, in the beginning of the engagement, ſaved himſelf by the ſwiftneſs of his horſe; but 8000 of the mountaineers were ſlain upon the ſpot, among whom was Bicané, general to Melca Chriſtos, an excellent officer both for council and the field, and ſeveral other conſiderable perſons, as well inhabitants of Laſta as others, who had taken that ſide from diſlike to the king and his meaſures.

Next morning the king went out with his ſon to ſee the field of battle, where the prince Facilidas is ſaid to have ſpoke to this effect in name of the army: "Theſe men, whom you ſee ſlaughtered on the ground, were neither Pagans nor Mahometans at whoſe death we ſhould rejoice—they were Chriſtians, lately your ſubjects and your countrymen, ſome of them your relations. This is not victory which is gained over ourſelves. In killing theſe you drive the ſword into your own entrails. How many men have you ſlaughtered? How many more have you to kill? We are become a proverb even among the Pagans and Moors for carrying on this war, and for apoſtatizing, as they ſay, from the faith of our anceſtors."—The king heard this ſpeech without reply, and returned manifeſtly diſconſolate to Dancaz; though many times before he had feaſted and triumphed for the gaining of a leſſer victory.

After his arrival at Dancaz, he had a conference with the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, who, in a long

long ſpeech, upbraided him with having deſerted the Catholic faith at the time when the victory obtained by their prayers gave him an opportunity of eſtabliſhing it. The king anſwered, with ſeeming indifference, that he had done every thing for the Catholic faith in his power; that he had ſhed the blood of thouſands, and as much more was to be ſhed; and ſtill he was uncertain if it would produce any effect; but that he ſhould think of it, and ſend him his reſolutions to morrow.

The next day Socinios made a declaration by Za Mariam to the patriarch, to this purport: "When we embraced the faith of Rome, we laboured for it with great diligence, but the people ſhewed no affection for it. Julius rebelled out of hatred againſt Sela Chriſtos, under pretence of being defender of the ancient faith, and was ſlain, together with many of his followers. Gabriel did the ſame. Tecla Georgis, likewiſe, made a league to die for the Alexandrian faith, which he did, and many people with him. The ſame did Serca Chriſtos the preceding year; and thoſe peaſants of Laſta fight for the ſame cauſe at this day. The faith of Rome is not a bad one; but the men of this country do not underſtand it. Let thoſe that like it remain in that faith, in the ſame way as the Portugueſe did in the time of Atzenaf Segued; let them eat and drink together, and let them marry the daughters of Abyſſinians. As for thoſe that are not inclined to the Roman faith, let them follow their ancient one as received from the church of Alexandria."

Upon this declaration, delivered by Za Mariam, the patriarch inquired if it came from the king.

Being

Being anſwered that it did; after a little pauſe, he returned this anſwer by Emanuel Almeyda, "That the patriarch underſtood that both religions ſhould be permitted in the kingdom, and that the Alexandrians were to have every indulgence that could be wiſhed by them, without violating the purity of the Catholic faith; that, therefore, he had no difficulty of allowing the people of Laſta to live in the faith of their anceſtors without alteration, as they had never embraced any other; but as for thoſe that had ſworn to perſiſt in the Catholic faith, and had received the communion in that church, by no means, without a grievous ſin, could it be granted to them to renounce that faith in which they had deliberately ſworn to live and die."

The king upon this anſwer, which he underſtood well, and expected, only replied, "What is to be done? I have no longer the power of government in my own kingdom;"—and immediately ordered a herald to make the following proclamation:—

"Hear us! hear us! hear us! Firſt of all we gave you the Roman Catholic faith, as thinking it a good one; but many people have died fighting againſt it, as Julius, Gabriel, Tecla Georgis, Serca Chriſtos, and, laſtly, theſe rude peaſants of Laſta. Now, therefore, we reſtore to you the faith of your anceſtors; let your own prieſts ſay their maſs in their own churches; let the people have their own altars for the ſacrament, and their own liturgy, and be happy. As for myſelf, I am now old and worn out with war and infirmities, and no longer capable of governing; I name my ſon Facilidas to reign in my place."

Thus,

Thus, in one day, fell the whole fabric of the Roman Catholic faith, and hierarchy of the church of Rome, in Abyſſinia; firſt regularly eſtabliſhed, as I muſt always think, by Peter Paez, in moderation, charity, perſeverance, long-ſuffering, and peace; extended and maintained afterwards by blood and violence beyond what could be expected from heathens, and thrown down by an exertion of the civil power in its own defence, againſt the encroachments of prieſthood and eccleſiaſtical tyranny, which plainly had no other view than, by annihilating the conſtitution under its native prince, to reduce Abyſſinia to a Portugueſe government, as had been the caſe with ſo many independent ſtates in India already.

This proclamation was made on the 14th of June 1632. After this Socinios took no care of public affairs. He had been for a long time afflicted with various complaints, eſpecially ſince the laſt campaign in Laſta; and affairs were now managed by prince Facilidas in his father's place, though he did not take upon him the title of King. Emana Chriſtos, brother of Sela Chriſtos, a ſteady Alexandrian, and Guebra Chriſtos, were then made governors of Laſta and Begemder; but no ſteps were taken in this interval againſt the Jeſuits.

On the 7th of September the king died, and was buried with great pomp, by his ſon Facilidas, in the church of Ganeta Jeſus, which he himſelf had built, profeſſing himſelf a Roman Catholic to the laſt. The Portugueſe hiſtorians deny both his reſignation of the crown, and his perſeverance in the Roman Catholic faith to his death, but this apparently for their own purpoſes.

He

He was a prince remarkable for his ſtrength of body; of great courage and elevation of mind; had early learned the exerciſe of arms, patience, perſeverance, and every military virtue that could be acquired; and had paſſed the firſt of his life as a private perſon, in the midſt of hardſhips and dangers.

He is celebrated to this day in Abyſſinia for a talent, which ſeems to be the gift of nature, that of chooſing upon the firſt view the proper ground for the camp or battle, and embracing, in his own mind in a moment, all the advantages and diſadvantages that could reſult from any particular part of it. This talent is particularly recorded in ſeveral ſhort proverbs, or military adages, ſuch as the following: "Blind him firſt, or you ſhall never beat him." This moſt material qualification ſeemed to have been in part tranſmitted to Ras Michael, the great general in my time, deſcended from Socinios by his mother; and, by this ſuperiority alone over the other commanders oppoſed to him, he is ſaid to have been victorious in forty-three pitched battles.

Socinios embraced the Catholic religion from conviction, and ſtudied it with great application, as far as his narrow means of inſtruction would allow him; and there can be no doubt that, under the moderate conduct of Peter Paez, who converted him, he would have died a martyr for that religion; and there ſeems as little reaſon to doubt, conſcientious as he was, if he had been a young man he would have quitted it for the good of his country, and from his inability to ſuffer the tyranny of the patriarch Alphonſo Mendes, and his

continual

continual encroachment upon civil government. Being, in the laſt years of his life, left without one ſoldier to draw his ſword for the Catholic cauſe, he kept his religion, and abandoned his crown; and having been, it ſhould ſeem, for ſome time convinced that the government of the church of Rome, in ſuch hands as he left it, was incompatible with monarchy, he took no pains to change Facilidas's known ſentiments, or to render him favourable to the Roman faith, or to name another of his ſons to ſucceed him whom he found to be more ſo.

The Jeſuits, conſidering only the cataſtrophe, and unmindful of the ſtrenuous efforts made to eſtabliſh their religion during his whole reign, have traduced his character as that of an apoſtate, for giving way to the univerſal demand of his people to have their ancient form of worſhip reſtored when his army had deſerted him, and he himſelf was dying of old age. But every impartial man will admit, that the ſtep he took of abdicating his ſovereignty over a people who had abjured the religion he had introduced among them, was, in his circumſtances, the nobleſt action of his life, and juſt the reverſe of apoſtacy.

This reſignation of the crown, and his tenacious perſevering in the Catholic faith, together with the moderation of his ſon, the prince Facilidas, in appointing a regency to govern, rather than to mount the throne himſelf during his father's life, are three facts which we know to be true from the Abyſſinian annals, and which the Jeſuits have endeavoured to ſuppreſs, that they might the more eaſily blacken

blacken the character both of the father and the ſon.

They have pretended that it was the queen, and other ladies at court, who by their influence ſeduced the king from the Catholic religion. But Socinios was then paſt ſeventy, and the queen near ſixty, and he had no other wives or miſtreſſes. To judge, moreover, by his behaviour in the affair of Adera, ſiſter to Tecla Georgis, the voice of the women at court ſeems to have no extraordinary weight with him. In a word, he never varied in his religion after he embraced that of Rome, but ſtedfaſtly adhered to it, when the pride and bad conduct of the Jeſuits, its profeſſors, had ſcarcely left another friend to it in the whole kingdom; and, therefore, the charge of apoſtacy is certainly an unmerited falſehood.

As it is plain the Portugueſe, from the beginning, believed their religion could only be eſtabliſhed by force, and were perſuaded ſuch means were lawful, the blame of ſo much bloodſhed for ſo many years, and the total miſcarriage of the whole ſcheme at laſt, lay at the door of their ſovereign, the king of Spain and Portugal; who, having ſucceeded to his wiſh in his conqueſt of India, ſeems not to have had the ſame anxiety the patriarch had for the converſion of Abyſſinia, nor even to have thought further of ſending a body of troops with his prieſts to the ſuccour of Socinios, whom he left to the prayers of Urban VIII. the merit of Ignatius Loyola, and the labours of his furious and fanatic diſciples.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.